



Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Long-Range Interpretive Plan



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Cover: Springtime view of the Chattahoochee River. (Credit: Tom Wilson)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Background: The River of Painted Rocks
Creating a Long-Range Interpretive Plan
Executive Summary

Foundation for Planning

Legislative Background	1
Park Purpose and Significance	2
Primary Interpretive Themes	3
Visitor Experience Goals	5
Visitor Data	9
Other Planning Considerations	11
	12

Existing Conditions

Pre-visit and Arrival Information	13
Sites and Facilities for Interpretation	14
Interpretive Programming	14
Interpretive Media	15
Media Assets	16
Partnerships	17
	18

Issues and Influences

19

Recommendations

23

River of Opportunity, River of Dreams	24
Interpretive Outreach	25
Interpretive Facilities	27
Non-Personal Services/Interpretive Media	31
Personal Services	35
Research Needs in Support of Interpretation	38
Equipment Needs in Support of Interpretation	38
Staffing Recommendations	39

Implementation

41

Appendices

49

Appendix A: Legislation	50
Appendix B: Planning Team	57



United States Department of the Interior



National Park Service
Chattahoochee River
National Recreation Area
1978 Island Ford Parkway
Sandy Springs, GA 30350

IN REPLY REFER TO:
K1817

December 9, 2011

Dear Friends and Patrons,

The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area offers a source of enjoyment and inspiration to millions of park visitors. Interpretation must appeal to visitors' needs and desires while informing the public about the Chattahoochee River watershed, its valuable resources, and its place within the National Park System. Completion of the Long-Range Interpretive Plan is an exciting chapter in the life of the park. This document provides a firm foundation in presenting our current accomplishments in education and interpretation and our potential for progress. This plan serves as the major tool for developing and implementing positive and influential visitor experiences now and in the future.

The Long-Range Interpretive Plan is a document that sharpens our focus and pulls together all of the education and interpretation efforts related to the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. The plan summarizes the park themes, identifies the desired visitor experience, describes the existing condition of interpretive services, and lists internal and external issues and influences. The plan also offers park managers and staff recommendations for achieving this long-term vision for interpretation.

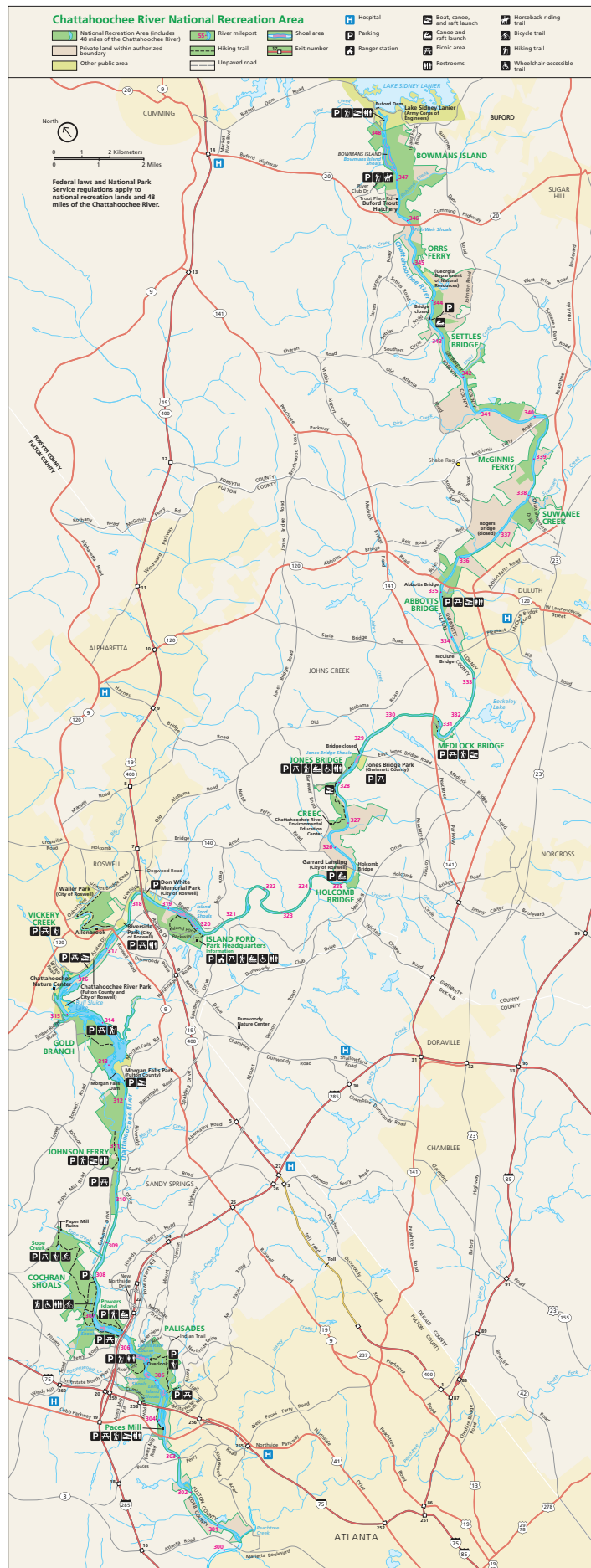
Park staff, partners, and stakeholders were engaged in this planning process. This collaborative effort produced a more comprehensive and inclusive look at how we will interpret the watershed and its resources. This document provides guidance for the park's programs and services for the next seven to ten years.

On behalf of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area and its partners, I hope you will take time to review this important plan. We are proud of the planning process involved in the development of this document and the outcomes which were collectively conceived. Please join us as we continue to move forward in our efforts to preserve and protect the values and resources within this vital watershed.

Sincerely,

Patty Wissinger
Superintendent





Map of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area.

Introduction

The River of Painted Rocks

The Chattahoochee River begins high in the north Georgia mountains and courses southwestward in a winding, rocky path along one of the oldest and most stable river channels in North America. On the way, the river also passes through metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia – star city of the Sunbelt, and perennially ranked as one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the United States. Traffic snarls on packed interstate highways around and through the city core, and commercial and residential development sprawls outward through 22 counties and spans hundreds of square miles.

Flowing through this population of nearly five million people, rippling under massive concrete bridges and rushing past acres of commercially landscaped office parks, the Chattahoochee River is an oasis of natural beauty, a riparian corridor of wildlife and scenic vistas just minutes from the world of high finance, shopping, and multi-million-dollar homes. Today the river, named by Creek Indians for its variety of exposed, colorful “painted rocks,” is protected for 48 miles through metro Atlanta by the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area – an accessible, near-at-hand recreational escape for millions of Atlanta-area residents and visitors.

A trip to the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area can be a quiet, solitary hike past ancient rock shelters and towering trees; a sunny, splashy excursion downriver with friends; a ranger-led tour of 19th-century mills and Civil War sites; a 4th-grade field trip to a historic farm; a daily jog or dog-walking trek on a favorite trail; or a festive family picnic with outdoor fun for toddlers, teens, and grandparents alike.

For the park and its partners and volunteers, providing millions of visitors with the wide-ranging interpretive programs and materials they need to fully appreciate and care for the park represents a significant challenge, but also an exciting and important opportunity.



The Creek named the Chattahoochee River for its colorful rocky shoals.

Creating a Long-Range Interpretive Plan

What is interpretive planning, and why does it matter?

In the hierarchy of planning approaches used by the National Park Service, interpretive planning is the primary planning approach focused directly on visitors and their needs. Interpretive planning seeks to understand how and why people choose to visit a site, what kinds of experiences they expect to have while there, and what kinds of programs and materials a park can provide to enhance those experiences and facilitate meaningful, personal connections with the park and its resources. While a park's management, land use, or facilities management planning may complement its interpretive plan, the interpretive plan stands as the fundamental planning tool for developing potential visitor experiences at a park.

This long-range interpretive plan (LRIP) for the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (CRNRA) has been developed by a consultant team working closely with the NPS, with assistance and input from individual stakeholders and park partners who participated in planning workshops in the spring through the fall of 2011. This plan will provide guidance for interpretive services and programming for the park for the next seven to ten years.

Barring legislative changes, the foundational elements in this plan are expected to remain constant over the life of the park. Specific recommendations about interpretive programs or media may need to be updated as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. In addition, further design documents must be produced to implement some of the recommendations set forth in this plan.

Executive Summary

As the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area enters its 35th year in 2012, its founders, supporters, and enthusiastic visitors have much to celebrate. Among other milestones, the authorized boundary of the recreation area has expanded from an initial 6,300 acres to 10,000 acres, a historic farmstead has been preserved, and visitation to the river corridor continues to climb.

This plan provides guidance for continuing and expanding the park's interpretive programming and services at a level commensurate with its growth and increasing popularity. Building on groundwork from the 2009 General Management Plan and an interpretive prospectus completed in 1989, this plan summarizes the park's existing interpretive program and current challenges, presents a set of interpretive themes, identifies desirable visitor experience goals, and offers concrete recommendations and strategies for strengthening and enhancing the interpretive program over the next ten years.

Interpretive Themes

With input from stakeholders and park staff, the 2011 planning team developed four primary interpretive themes, each with its own supporting subthemes and storylines. These four primary themes are as follows:

Primary Theme # 1:

The natural, undeveloped environment of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is an irreplaceable contributor to the quality of life in metropolitan Atlanta, offering a place for healthy recreation and unstructured play.

Primary Theme #2:

The Chattahoochee River is the primary water resource for a significant portion of the state of Georgia, including Lake Sidney Lanier, metropolitan Atlanta, and Columbus.

Primary Theme # 3:

The Chattahoochee River corridor contains a rich record of human history dating back thousands of years and extending to the present day.

Primary Theme # 4:

The Chattahoochee River and its watershed constitute a unique geological and biological setting that supports and sustains a vast variety of native plant and animal communities.

Recommendations

A strengthened interpretive program with adequate physical, financial, and staff support can guide the CRNRA to new levels of accomplishment, public awareness, and community support in the decade to come.

In brief, this LRIP recommends key steps in the following areas:

- Outreach recommendations include targeted, community-focused efforts such as establishing volunteer committees for specific outreach audiences; creating a dedicated Friends group for the park; starting a bicycle patrol; and reinvigorating a sustained, high-profile and widespread emphasis on safety on the river.
- Facilities recommendations focus on bold initiatives to make park interpretation far more accessible to most park visitors, including expanding the seasonal visitor contact station at Powers Island, adding outdoor exhibits and visitor services at Johnsons Ferry, adding in-park concessions and permanent interpretive staff offices at these two locations, and repurposing the existing visitor contact station at Hewlett Lodge. Additional interpretive facilities recommendations include adding roving interpretation by use of outfitted interpretive vans and watercraft, installing satellite concessions at high-traffic areas such as Cochran Shoals and Settles Bridge, establishing visitor facilities at Hyde Farm, and improving the physical capacities of the Chattahoochee River Environmental Education Center.
- Interpretive media recommendations focus on more extensive use and integration of an array of electronic media, including social media, for key messaging, including safety and primary themes; creating a new orientation film for the park; upgrading traditional print materials; improving the park's identity, branding, and messaging through upgraded exterior exhibits and wayfinding; and creating an innovative new theme-based outdoor exhibit space at Powers Island.
- Interpretive staffing recommendations have been formulated to support significant changes in the CRNRA's interpretive facilities, visibility with the public, and corresponding staffing increases to offer more visitor interactions and roving (not only on foot, but also by van and by boat). Through a combination of permanent and seasonal employees, the teacher-ranger-teacher program, trained volunteers, and additional supporting personnel, this plan envisions a well-staffed CRNRA interpretive program that can continue providing high-quality, engaging interpretation for park visitors in the coming years.



Foundation for Planning

Legislative Background

On August 15, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed legislation authorizing the establishment of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (CRNRA) along the route of the Chattahoochee River from Buford Dam at Lake Sidney Lanier southward to the river's intersection with Peachtree Creek in northwest Atlanta. In the legislation, Congress recognized that the "the natural, scenic, recreation, historic, and other values of a forty-eight mile segment of the Chattahoochee River and certain adjoining lands in the State of Georgia from Buford Dam downstream to Peachtree Creek are of special national significance, and... such values should be preserved and protected from developments and uses which would substantially impair or destroy them."

In October 1984, this original legislation was amended to authorize federal support to protect a 2,000-foot-wide corridor on both sides of the river. In 1999, additional legislation increased the total authorized acreage for the CRNRA to 10,000 acres, enabling cooperative efforts with state and local governments to "link existing units of the recreation area through a series of linear corridors" along the river. This law specified:

The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area in the State of Georgia is a nationally significant resource;

The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area has been adversely affected by land use changes occurring inside and outside the recreation area;

The population of the metropolitan Atlanta area continues to expand northward, leaving dwindling opportunities to protect the scenic, recreational, natural, and historical values of the 2,000-foot-wide corridor adjacent to each bank of the Chattahoochee River and its impoundments in the 48-mile segment known as the area of national concern;

The State of Georgia has enacted the Metropolitan River Protection Act to ensure protection of the corridor located within 2,000 feet of each bank of the Chattahoochee River, or the corridor located within the 100-year floodplain, whichever is larger; [and]

The corridor located within the 100-year floodplain includes the area of national concern. ...

The legislation also pointed out that

Since establishment of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, visitor use of the recreation area has shifted dramatically from waterborne to water-related and land-based activities;

The State of Georgia and political subdivisions of the state along the Chattahoochee River have indicated willingness to join in a cooperative effort with the federal government to link existing units of the recreation area through a series of linear corridors to be established within the area of national concern and elsewhere on the river; and

If Congress appropriates funds in support of the cooperative effort described in paragraph (7), funding from the State, political subdivisions of the State, private foundations, corporate entities, private individuals, and other sources will be available to fund more than half the estimated cost of the cooperative effort.

Park Purpose

As part of the park's 2009 General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, the following formal statement of the purpose of the park was developed:

The purpose of Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is to lead the preservation and protection of the 48-mile Chattahoochee River corridor from Buford Dam to Peachtree Creek, and its associated natural and cultural resources, for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.

Park Significance

The significance of the natural and cultural resources in Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is summarized in the statements that follow. This information was used in the general management planning process to ensure that the park's natural and cultural resources are protected in accordance with the governing laws, regulations, policies, and mandates.

Geological Significance. The park's entire 48-mile-long corridor runs along the Brevard Fault Zone, which forms the Chattahoochee River channel. Typically, rivers meander and change course over time. Because it is essentially "locked" in place by the fault, the Chattahoochee River is one of the oldest and most stable river channels within the United States.

The Brevard Fault is a major geological feature extending for more than 320 miles. It forms, in part, the dividing line between two physiographic provinces: the Appalachian Mountains and the Piedmont Plateau. The steep and rocky Palisades section of the park is generally considered to be the best location along the entire Brevard Fault Zone to view and study this major geologic feature.

Biological Significance. The park contains a diverse assemblage of relatively undisturbed mesic hardwood floodplain, bluff, and ravine forests; seasonally and temporarily flooded bottomland forested wetlands; and emergent and scrub-shrub wetlands.

The mixed habitat types within the old and stable Chattahoochee River channel form a biological link with the Appalachian Mountains, resulting in high biodiversity within the park. For example, more than 950 species of plants exist within the park, including species associated with both the southern piedmont and mountain habitats. This number of plants is one of the highest within the National Park System. It is especially noteworthy that this unusually high level of biodiversity is located in an area accessible to a large metropolitan population.

The diverse habitats in the park support numerous rare plants and animals, including both aquatic and terrestrial species. Several species are assigned special status by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Program and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These species warrant special regulations to assist their long-term survival and protection.

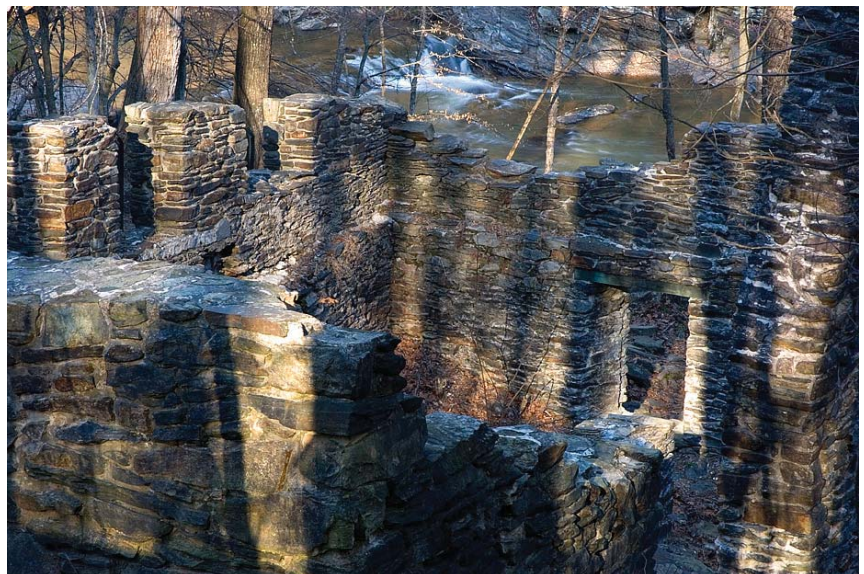
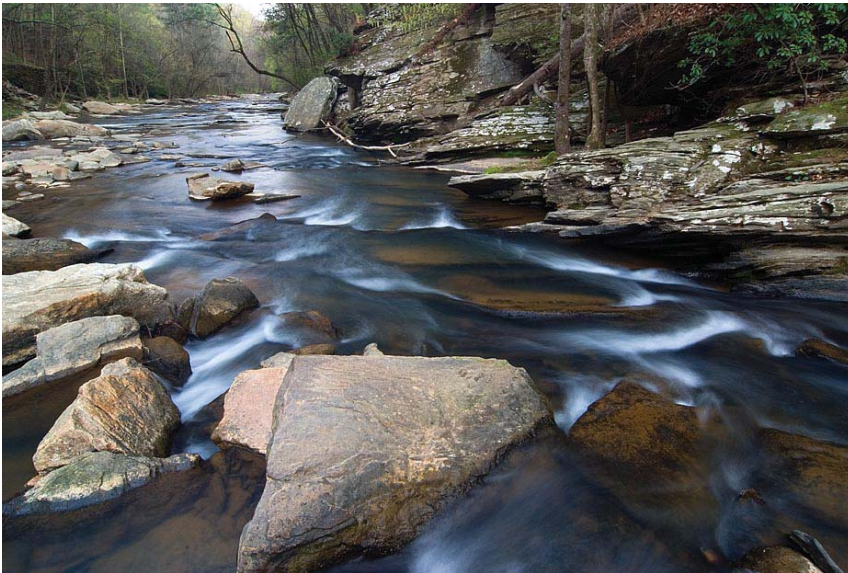
Cultural Resources Significance. The park vicinity has been occupied by humans since the Archaic period, approximately 10,000 years ago. Some of the park's remaining prehistoric features include fish weirs, rock-shelters, quarries, and prehistoric occupation sites. In addition, the park contains numerous Woodland Period sites along the river corridor (1000 B.C.E. to approximately 1000), as reported in the park's first general management plan developed in 1989. The Woodland period is one of the least investigated periods of Georgia prehistory and represents an area of potentially high archeological significance and research potential for the park. There are no similar counterparts in the region.

The park contains approximately 197 archeological sites (NPS 2005a). These sites, and the more than 14,000 associated archeological artifacts, document the historical and prehistoric use and cultural adaptation of the early cultures, up to and including the Creek and Cherokee Nations. The Chattahoochee River is considered to have been the transitory border between these two great cultures.

The park also contains numerous historic archeological sites and standing structures, including Civil War sites, pre-Civil War home sites and farmhouses, at least 10 early ferry crossings, and pre-Civil War paper mill and woolen mill sites. The mills are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Recreational Significance. The park constitutes an important outdoor recreation resource to several million people located in the Atlanta metropolitan area. The park's greenspace and the river improve the quality of life by serving as a sanctuary and by providing a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities such as hiking, nature viewing, paddling, bicycling, boating, and fishing. The Chattahoochee River is inhabited by approximately 15 species of game fish.

The park provides a scenic river corridor with opportunities for natural solitude and seclusion within relatively undisturbed forests, wetlands, bluffs, ravines, and open water areas. The opportunity is enhanced by the proximity to a major metropolitan area.



The significances of the natural and cultural resources of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area are vast and diverse.

All photos on this page by Tom Wilson.

Primary Interpretive Themes

What does the Chattahoochee River mean to visitors? Depending on their personal interests, background, and experiences, it may mean an exciting outdoor adventure on rafts or kayaks; an imaginative trip back in time to the tragic scenes of the Civil War; a living science laboratory for the study of water, geology, or biology; or simply a pleasant, scenic environment for taking a walk or exercising an energetic Labrador retriever. Whatever its special personal meaning for individuals, the river corridor and its environs have the capacity to speak to universal human emotions and desires – to have meaning – for people of all eras, cultures, interests, and abilities.

According to the National Association for Interpretation, the art of interpretation is to help visitors, whoever they are and whatever their interests, to forge “emotional and intellectual connections. . . with the meanings inherent in the resource.” These meanings – identified as primary themes – are the main messages or most important stories of the historic resource, delivered in ways that encourage visitors to make a personal connection with the site as they experience it.

Clear, simple interpretive themes are essential in helping a park define and focus its interpretive program and provide visitors with an enjoyable, rewarding experience in the park, whatever activity they choose to pursue. Supplemented by subthemes and supported by specific storylines, each primary interpretive theme serves as a guiding principle for creating theme-driven interpretive programming and media. Ideally, the resulting programs and materials will reach out to all visitors with universal themes, while also inspiring unique individual emotions, insights, and “ah-hah!” moments as each visitor finds his or her own unique, compelling connection with the resource.

Drawing on input from CRNRA stakeholders, volunteers, and park staff, the following primary interpretive themes have been developed to guide the park’s interpretive program for the next seven to ten years:

Primary Theme # 1:

The natural, undeveloped environment of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is an irreplaceable contributor to the quality of life in metropolitan Atlanta, offering a place for healthy recreation and unstructured play.

Subthemes:

- The river corridor is a unique, connected stretch of greenspace through multiple jurisdictions, allowing visitors to find respite, solitude, natural beauty, and wildlife within minutes of one of the country’s most highly developed metropolitan areas.

Sample storylines:

- The age-old human impulse to seek solace in nature
- The Chattahoochee as inspiration: novels, poetry, music, art, photography capturing meaningful experiences on the river
- Documented historic uses of the river and its environs for leisure and spiritual activities: Victorian picnics, baptisms, swimming holes, boat races, the 1970s raft race, etc.
- Public effort resulting in creation of CRNRA to protect the area from commercial/residential development



Paddling the Chattahoochee River is a great way to discover yourself and the river.

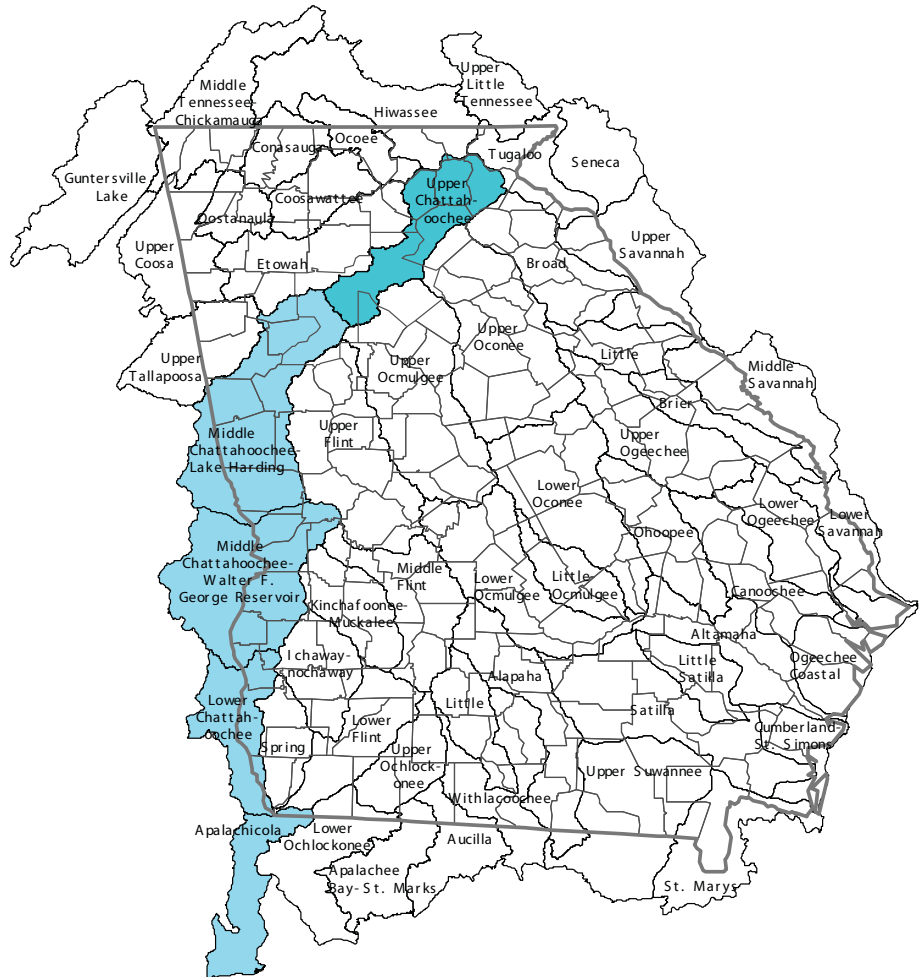
- The Chattahoochee River NRA offers a wide range of accessible outdoor options, including hiking, boating, fishing, swimming, and picnicking.
Sample storylines:
 - Nature hikes, tours of cultural sites
 - Guided tours of river
 - Water safety
 - Outdoor safety/ caution in natural areas
- The Chattahoochee River NRA offers modern visitors a place to escape the confines of urban life, immerse themselves in the natural world, and test their endurance and self-reliance.
Sample storylines:
 - Contemporary challenges and dangers of the river
 - Safety messages in encountering nature/wild surroundings

Primary Theme #2:

The Chattahoochee River is the primary water resource for a significant portion of the state of Georgia, including Lake Sidney Lanier, metropolitan Atlanta, and Columbus.

Subthemes:

- Maintaining the water quality in the Chattahoochee River is of vital importance to human health and the natural environment.
Sample storylines:
 - What is water quality, and why is it important?
 - Human impacts on water quality
- The Chattahoochee watershed – the expanse of land from which water drains and flows into the Chattahoochee River – is an interconnected system; environmental impacts upstream have downstream consequences throughout its course.
Sample storylines:
 - What is a watershed?
 - Caring for your watershed
 - Chattahoochee watershed challenges
- The River's riparian corridor and associated wetlands help cleanse and sustain water quality throughout the region.
Sample storylines:
 - Riparian habitats: who needs them?
 - Chattahoochee wetlands, past/present/future



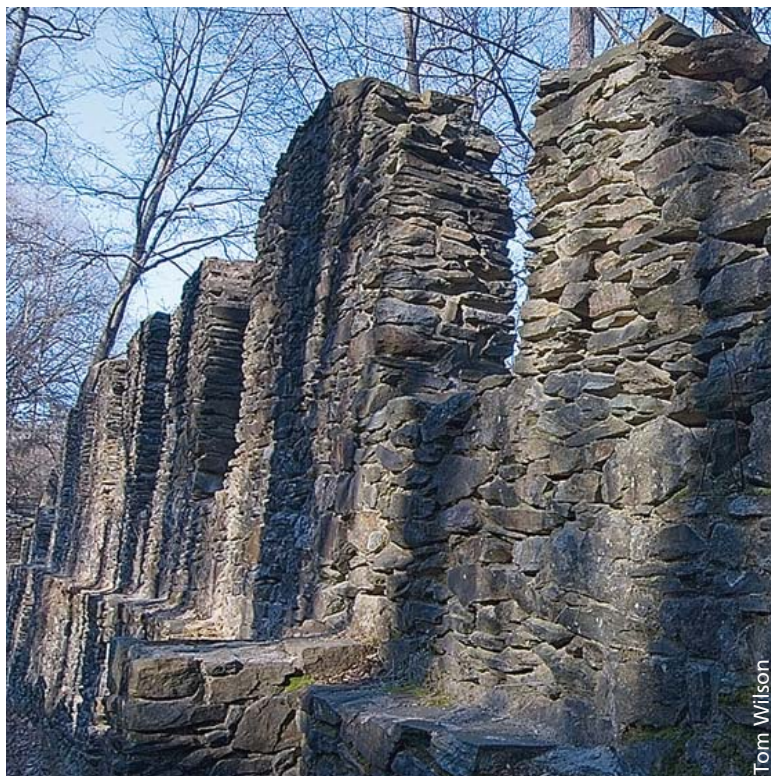
The Chattahoochee River watershed extends diagonally across the northern part of the state to the Alabama state line, where it follows the state line to the Apalachicola River.

Primary Theme # 3:

The Chattahoochee River corridor contains a rich record of human history dating back thousands of years and extending to the present day.

Subthemes:

- The river corridor's water, food resources, and rock shelters attracted and supported Archaic hunter-gatherers and people of the Woodland culture dating back thousands of years.
Sample storylines:
 - Archeological findings from Archaic and Woodland cultures
 - Culture and daily life of these inhabitants
- Both Creek and Cherokee Indians relied on the Chattahoochee River for centuries, with the river serving as a travel route and a territorial boundary between tribes.
Sample storylines:
 - Early travelers' challenges in crossing and/or navigating the river – a natural boundary for cultures, natural systems, etc.
 - Early trails following the river
- The park preserves evocative examples of 19th-century textile and paper mills, as well as an intact early 20th-century primitive farmstead.
Sample storylines:
 - Civil War stories along the river
 - Harnessing the tributaries of the river for industry: the Marietta Paper Mill, the Roswell mills
 - Hyde Farm and historic agriculture of the Georgia Piedmont
- Through the centuries, human needs and activities have profoundly impacted – and continue to impact – the river's water quality, its native vegetation and animal life, and its water level and flow.
Sample storylines:
 - Fish weirs and other interventions by Native Americans
 - Crossing the river: fords, ferries, bridges
 - Milling activity along the tributaries of the river
 - Morgan Falls Dam and Buford Dam
 - Water pollution and clean-up
 - Humans as carriers of invasive species



Stone walls of the Marietta Paper Mill serve as silent testimony to the industrious people living in the Chattahoochee River corridor.

Primary Theme # 4:

The Chattahoochee River and its watershed constitute a unique geological and biological setting that supports and sustains a vast variety of native plant and animal communities.

Subthemes:

- The Chattahoochee River flows along an ancient, highly stable channel formed by the Brevard Fault, a 320-mile-long geological feature that divides the Appalachian Mountain region from the Piedmont Plateau.

Sample Storylines:

- Viewing the Brevard Fault at the Palisades
 - Rock shelters used by prehistoric humans
 - The representation of geological time
 - The influence of the underlying geology on the river's course and water quality/characteristics
-
- The river corridor supports and sustains a vast variety of native plant and animal communities as its waters flow from the north Georgia mountains southwest to the Flint River and the Apalachicola estuary on the Gulf of Mexico.
- #### *Sample storylines:*
- Exploring ecosystems along the river
 - Fish and aquatic life
 - Wildlife walks and stories
 - Native animals as seen from the river: beavers, otters, kingfishers, herons
 - Plant communities: seasonal wildflower blooms, wetland plants, etc.
 - The dependence of coastal ecosystems, including Apalachicola oysters, on water flow from the Chattahoochee for life
 - Exotic and invasive plants and animals (from kudzu to tiger mosquitoes), their effects on native ecosystems, and how the CRNRA works to prevent their spread
 - Rare and endangered species
 - The effects of climate change on the river and its ecosystems
-
- White-tailed deer can be found along the entire length of the river in the park.
- 8 | National Park Service

Visitor Experience Goals

Most visitors to the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area are seeking some type of “river experience” when they visit the park, whether along the trails or actually in or on the river.

This long-range interpretive plan explores ways to enhance, expand, and improve visitor experiences throughout the park. Specifically, this plan addresses ways that interpreters and interpretive media can function to help visitors **do** meaningful activities, **learn** key messages about the site, **feel** an emotional connection to this special place, and **behave** differently as a result of visiting the site.

The following visitor experience goals have been identified as appropriate for visitors of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities as they visit the CRNRA:

Experiential Goals

Visitors of all ages and abilities should have opportunities to make personal connections to the park by doing the following:

- Accessing and exploring the Chattahoochee River and its natural environs through physical, sensory experiences with the resource – i.e., seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting “the great outdoors” of this natural river corridor within a highly developed urban area.
- Engaging in a choice of physical recreational activities on and along the river, such as:
 - Walking, jogging, or running on park paths
 - Boating, paddling, or rafting
 - Fishing
 - Bird-watching
 - Nature walks to view wildflowers, autumn leaves, birds and other wildlife, etc.
 - Cycling
 - Picnicking and family time
 - Nature photography and other arts



Celebrating the opening of expanded recreational opportunities in the recreational area.

- Exploring cultural history sites in the park, including 19th-century mill ruins, the historic Hyde Farm, historic houses such as Hewlett Lodge and Allenbrook, pre-Civil War structures built by Georgians held as slaves, and evidence of human occupation dating back for thousands of years.
- Enjoying the open greenspaces of the park for unstructured recreation, informal sports and play, family activities, and relaxation.

Knowledge Goals

Visitors of all ages and abilities should have opportunities to:

- Learn about the Chattahoochee River and its vital role in providing water for household and industrial use for millions of Georgians.
- Understand the value of the river corridor as a haven for wildlife, fish, and native plants – as well as for people – through the centuries.
- Discover intriguing cultural and historical connections to present-day Atlanta in the park's historic and cultural sites and artifacts.
- Gain valuable life knowledge about personal responsibility and personal safety in the natural world.

Emotional Goals

Visitors of all ages and abilities should have opportunities to:

- Appreciate the natural beauty, quiet, nature sounds, and solitude of the river corridor.
- Feel a sense of awe, wonder, and renewed appreciation for an essential, extraordinary, life-giving force we often take for granted: water.
- Have fun! Enjoy the rippling river, the sunshine and the clouds, the laughter of friends, or the stillness of a great blue heron hiding along the shore.

Behavioral Goals

Visitors of all ages and abilities should find inspiration and guidance to:

- Become volunteers, stewards, and advocates for the park.
- Examine and improve their individual roles and responsibilities as consumers of water resources within the Chattahoochee River watershed.
- Make repeat visits to the CRNRA.
- Expand their knowledge of the CRNRA and its variety of natural and cultural offerings.
- Introduce the CRNRA to family and friends.
- Recognize that they are in a National Park and treat this landscape with respect.

Visitor Data

Visitation to the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is estimated to be around 3.1 million people per year (2010 data). The vast majority of these visitors are clustered in a few river access points such as Cochran Shoals and the Palisades areas to enjoy a variety of river sports: rafting, canoeing, kayaking, tubing, swimming, or fishing.

Another substantial portion of visitors are “regulars” who use the CRNRA as a local park for daily or weekly fitness walking and running, bicycling, dog walking, and other recreational pursuits. The numbers of people engaged in these kinds of activities are difficult to measure with precision, but it is clear that the riverside trails are perennially popular – and intensely championed – by local users with long-standing personal relationships with the park.

Students in grades K-12 and at the college level also constitute a significant audience for this close-in, accessible natural area. K-12 students typically visit on organized classroom trips supported by curriculum-based programming and on-site learning tied to state education standards. College students in geology, ecology, environment science and other life sciences turn to the river corridor as a living laboratory for research and study.

A comparatively small fraction of the park’s visitors come to the Island Ford Visitor Center, in large part because of the sheer size of the park and its multiple visitor access points. Similarly, the number of CRNRA visitors who have direct contact with a park ranger through programs or roving encounters is a small fraction of the total park visitation, even though ranger programs are typically packed to capacity and receive excellent visitor response.



Contacting park visitors is a valuable way of obtaining feedback from their park experience.

According to a park-commissioned Visitor Study in summer 2010, a total of 81% of visitors surveyed lived in Fulton and Cobb counties (the two metro counties the park traverses), with an additional 13% from other nearby metro counties (Gwinnett, DeKalb, Cherokee, and Forsyth). Of the total visitors surveyed, 93% were white, 4% were Asian, 5% identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, and approximately 2% were African American. The sample population was 622 visitors as compared to the total park visitation of 3.1 million.

Park staff and partners report anecdotal evidence of increasing numbers of Hispanic visitors, especially family groups, in recent years. Visitation by African Americans seems to be quite low, especially considering that U.S. Census data for 2010 shows that 43.1% of Fulton County residents and 23.8% of Cobb County residents are African American.

Other Planning Considerations

As the primary water supply for a major metropolitan area, the Chattahoochee River occupies a unique place in the Atlanta political landscape and its large, multi-jurisdictional planning arena. While the CRNRA is not directly involved in most of these matters, other regional planning efforts can affect the park. For example:

- County, state, and federal water quality and environmental regulations pertain to the river and its environs in myriad ways, most obviously in the regulation of its water flow by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Buford Dam.
- The decades-long dispute among Georgia, Florida, and Alabama regarding rights to the water resources of the Chattahoochee River will continue to affect the CRNRA.



Tom Wilson

Existing Conditions

Pre-visit and Arrival Information

Pre-visit information and interpretive material is available on the park website (www.nps.gov/chat) and on partners' websites, including websites of the commercial concessionaires offering river trips and websites by municipal and county parks departments. The park is also described in numerous print and online media listings, as well as many hiking and rafting websites, with varying degrees of accuracy and up-to-date information.

The park staff regularly informs the public of upcoming events, news, and special programs through news releases sent to local newspapers, television and radio stations, organizations, magazines, and the park website.

Park entrances off major highways are well-marked. Parking lots for the most popular river access points reach capacity quickly on weekends year round in good weather.

Sites and Facilities for Interpretation

Visitors to the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area currently find some 20 different access points and sites along the river corridor from Buford Dam southward to Paces Mill. These sites are organized into 17 NPS administrative units, plus several additional sites or access points managed by partners.

Most public access areas have parking lots, river access for watercraft, trail access, multiple trash containers and, at a minimum, one large vertical sign promoting basic safety information on the river. Sites with heaviest usage and greatest accessibility have NPS entrance fee stations and a selection of three-panel kiosks developed in the mid-1990s in anticipation of the

Centennial Olympic Games. These kiosks typically contain one interpretive overview panel, one site-specific panel, and the third side as a glass case for posting bulletins and other temporary information.

The historic Hewlett Lodge at Island Ford functions both as park headquarters and as the park visitor center. This small visitor center within the historic lodge has a staffed reception area and a small Eastern National bookstore.

Visitors can access the park and the river at the following locations:

1. Buford Dam (managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)
2. Bowman's Island (includes equestrian trail)
3. Orrs Ferry (no parking, undeveloped)
4. Settles Bridge
5. McGinnis Ferry (currently undergoing DOT road-widening)
6. Rogers Bridge (no parking, undeveloped)
7. Abbotts Bridge
8. Medlock Bridge
9. Jones Bridge and the Chattahoochee River Environmental Education Center
10. Holcomb Bridge/Garrard Landing (City of Roswell)
11. Island Ford (Park Headquarters)
12. Vickery Creek (City of Roswell and NPS)
13. Gold Branch
14. Johnson Ferry North and Johnson Ferry South
15. Cochran Shoals (Columns Drive and Interstate North)
16. Sope Creek (paper mill ruins)
17. Powers Island
18. Palisades East and Palisades West
19. Paces Mill

In addition to these public-access sites, the historic Allenbrook House and the historic Hyde Farm will be open to the public via tours or other special arrangements in the near future.

Personal Services/ Interpretive Programming

The interpretive program at CRNRA offers a substantial number of in-depth, interpreter-led programs on-site and as outreach presentations year-round. Winter walks, night walks, and campfire events add a special appeal.

Personal interpretive services in 2010-2011 include a revolving schedule of the following programs:

- Winter Walk/Georgia Botanical Society
- Evening in the Park/Sibley Pond Sunset
- Snakes of the Chattahoochee
- Autumn Moon
- Owl Prowl
- Nature Discovery Walks
- Spring Wildflower Walks
- Earth Day/River Discovery Float
- Frog Frolics
- Paddle with a Ranger (Palisades Canoe Float)
- Kids Fishing Day
- Wild Edibles Workshop and Walk
- National Trails Day events
- National Public Lands Day events



Children are intrigued with nature.

- Back to the Chattahoochee River Race and Festival
- Summer Splash
- Roswell Mill Walks
- Allenbrook House Tours
- Sunset Strolls
- River and a Movie
- Cycle with a Ranger

Educational Programs

The park has provided a highly popular, high-quality curriculum of educational programming for many years.

Educational programs range from kindergarten through high school and meet Georgia Department of Education Performance Standards for designated subject areas and grade levels. The following programs were available in 2010-2011:

- Kindergarten: "Fur, Feathers, and Scales"
- Kindergarten and 1st grade; 3rd and 4th grades: "Aquatic Macro-invertebrates"
- Kindergarten and 1st grade; 3rd and 4th grades: "Forest Watershed Walk"
- 1st and 2nd grades: "Farm Life" (Traveling Trunk)
- 1st through 3rd grades: "The Story of a River"
- 2nd and 3rd grades: "Regions of Georgia"
- 2nd and 4th grades: "American Indians" (Traveling Trunk)
- 3rd grade and high school: "Leave No Trace"
- 4th grade: "Farming Practices" (Traveling Trunk)
- 4th through 12th grades: "The National Park Service! What does it mean to you?"
- 8th grade: "The Mighty Chattahoochee: A Study of Water Power"
- High School: "Aquatic Microinvertebrate Studies"

In addition to these established educational programs, the park has organized and presented overnight trips to Hyde Farm for Cobb County 4th-grade students, dependent upon funding and preferences. Additionally, the park works with Tritt Elementary School in Cobb County and offers annual River Corridor education programs that include an overnight at the Chattahoochee River Environmental Education Center (CREEC). Students float down the river on rafts and study water quality at one of the take-out areas.

Park staff members also offer educators in-depth professional development workshops that focus on water quality and the environmental sciences.

A Junior Ranger Day Camp has been planned for 2012, dependent on NPS funding. The camp will be offered to 10- to 12-year-olds and held at the CREEC. Title 1 students will be eligible for the camp.

Non-Personal Services/ Interpretive Media

Audiovisuals

The park has no audiovisual interpretive materials in 2011, with the exception of a large television monitor in the Hewlett Lodge visitor center/bookstore space; this screen is used to show Ken Burns' PBS program on the National Park System.

Interior Exhibits

The park has no permanent interior interpretive exhibits at present. The Hewlett Lodge public spaces display several large photographs of the river and environs by local photographers. The park does have a portable 10x10 exhibit with a large photo of the park and two side panels available for changeable interpretive media. Multiple tabletop exhibits have been developed in-house to be used at various local festivals, conferences, and other special events.



Students learn about water quality when testing water samples in the field.

Exterior Exhibits

As described above, a system of 1996 Olympic-era park orientation kiosks with 36" x 48" panels containing maps and interpretation stand at 22 locations within the park boundaries. One low-profile wayside sign describing the designation of the National Recreation Area stands on a trail access point near Hewlett Lodge. Another low-profile wayside sign describes the wetland restoration project at Johnson Ferry South.

In addition to the older kiosks and waysides, the park recently added seven new exterior wayside exhibits:

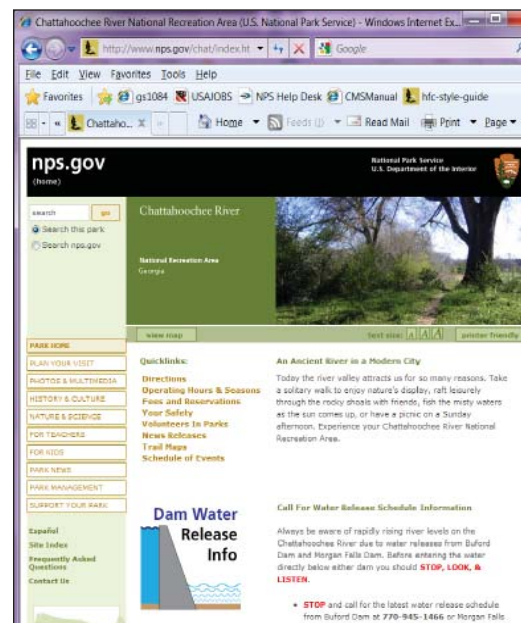
- At Vickery Creek unit near Allenbrook: Ivy and Laurel Mills and Allenbrook House
- At Jones Bridge picnic area: History of Jones Bridge
- At Island Ford: History of Hewlett Lodge
- At Island Ford along river trail at Sixes Trail: River Crossings
- At Sope Creek: Paper Mill covered bridge at Sope Creek
- At Cochran Shoals near rockshelter: Native Americans
- At Island Ford: Champion of the Chattahoochee

Printed Publications

- Unigrid brochure with park map
- Rack card
- Park newsletter
- River Guide – a waterproof map of the river with interpretive information for boaters
- Seasonal brochures listing interpretive program topics and schedules
- Junior Ranger booklet
- Field Study booklet

Web-based Interpretive Materials

The park website (www.nps.gov/chat) provides visitor information and interpretive material on some elements of the park's natural and cultural history.



The park website provides information about upcoming interpretive programs.

Media Assets

Archival and Archaeological collections: Because the CRNRA has no archival facilities on-site, its archival collections are housed at the NPS Southeastern Archeological Center in Tallahassee, Florida. In addition, some items are stored (and awaiting archiving) at the park headquarters. To date, collections consist of historic documents, photographs, manuscripts, documentation of the administrative history of the park, and related materials.

Artifacts: Hyde Farm artifacts will be stored at a facility located at the Akers Mill area of the park.

Partnerships

The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area has informal partnership relationships with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as well as state agencies and county and municipal governments. In addition, the park partners with several non-profit organizations, including the Chattahoochee Nature Center and the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, and numerous homeowner associations on properties bordering the park.

The park has developed a solid working partnership with the Chattahoochee Nature Center through the sharing of resources, staff, and training opportunities. The primary focus is education and interpretive programming.

The park also partners with the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper to expand volunteer opportunities, share staff resources for recreational and interpretive programs, and collaborate on the annual river race and festival.

In addition, the park works closely with its contracted concessionaires (Commercial Use Authorizations) operating river craft rental facilities and offering fishing services and educational

services in locations adjacent to the park. (No concessions are permitted within the park at this time.) The 2011 concessionaires are:

- Shoot the Hooch (non-motorized boat rentals, shuttle service)
- High Country Outfitters (non-motorized boat rentals, shuttle service)
- The Dam Store (non-motorized boat rentals, shuttle service)
- Go with the Flow (boat demonstrations)
- Urban Currents (non-motorized boat rentals, shuttle service)
- River through Atlanta (fishing services)
- Chattahoochee River Outfitters (fishing services)
- Chattahoochee Nature Center (guided canoe trips)
- Learning on the Log (outdoor activities for youth with special needs)
- Outdoor Recreation Adventures (outdoor activities for youth with special needs)

The park recently completed a Commercial Services Strategy plan. This plan will guide CRNRA in determining the need for an in-park concessionaire and what services would be appropriate for this concessionaire to provide.



Park staff and volunteers work with Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper members to learn more about the river during river cleanups.



Issues and Influences

Access for All?

For millions of potential visitors, The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is close by – but hard to reach. No public transportation delivers visitors within a reasonable walking distance of the park. Visitors must arrive by car; then they must find a parking place. (Parking lots fill quickly during good weather, especially on weekends and in the summer.)

Once visitors arrive at the park, they cannot “paddle the river” unless they have their own conveyance (raft, canoe, etc.). Alternately, visitors without their own river craft must go to a commercial outfitter/concessionaire to arrange for rental of a non-motorized water craft. This transaction must occur prior to arriving at the park to begin the paddle trip.

For many visitors, accessing the river in either of these two ways is affordable and fun. For less affluent visitors, the costs of owning their own watercraft or renting a commercial craft may be prohibitive.

Getting the News Out

In a large media market such as Atlanta, with dozens of media outlets and millions of people, breaking through the information overload to reach targeted audiences can be a challenge. For the CRNRA, public information and communication efforts are compounded by the linear nature of the park, multiple units with multiple names and varying uses within the park, multiple governmental jurisdictions, and visual identity and wayfinding problems. In particular, effective information dissemination, site names and NPS identity, and consistent wayfinding can do much to support and enhance future interpretive programming throughout the site.

Making Visitor Contact

Many visitors never visit the “official” park visitor center at Island Ford, which is central to the 48-mile stretch of river but not as heavily used as the units adjacent to the perimeter. Furthermore, the current visitor center location is inside a historic house space with its own cultural history features and cannot be readily adapted to best-practices visitor center interpretive features such as films and large-scale interactive interpretive exhibits. Consequently, for many visitors the park as a whole may seem to lack a focal point for visitor contact: There is no single place where a visitor can stop, gather informational and interpretive material, or have a visitor experience that captures the CRNRA’s range of resources, themes, and offerings.

Visitors can and do encounter park rangers throughout the park, but the logistics of travel and staff capacity mean that these highly desirable park/visitor encounters do not happen for the vast majority of visitors.

Changing Populations

In recent decades, the surrounding population of the metro Atlanta area has changed dramatically, with many different ethnicities and languages in common usage throughout the area. To date, most of the interpretive materials for CRNRA are in English. The water quality signs are in both English and Spanish, as well as all of the regulatory signs, including the new PFD (personal floatation device) safety signs. Meeting the needs of the area’s growing multi-ethnic populations will be an increasing concern of interpreters in the coming years.

Safety and Stewardship on Water... and on Land

An increasingly urbanized population using the resource poses increased risks from personal injury, as well as basic behavioral habits regarding nature areas. Water safety, trash, river and trail courtesy, and related concerns represent continuing challenges for the park – challenges in which targeted interpretation can offer assistance.



College students learn to care for the river by picking up trash, not tossing it.

The Newest Acquisition: Historic Hyde Farm

Hyde Farm, currently in the process of stabilization and restoration, offers tremendous opportunities and challenges for CRNRA and its partners. The farmstead is owned by Cobb County, while the National Park Service owns the peripheral land. An agreement is in place between the park and Cobb County to operate the farm in partnership by providing educational programming, public access, and resource protection. Much planning and some seasonal implementation are already underway and provide an excellent foundation on which to build.



The barn at Hyde Farm opens the educational program possibilities for school groups.

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Recommendations

River of Opportunity, River of Dreams

As the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area matures as an integral part of metropolitan Atlanta and the National Park System, the NPS and its partners have been quite successful in protecting the river and its natural and cultural resources. While much remains to be done, the river corridor within the recreation area no longer faces the threat of imminent development, and the river's preservation as a prime recreational resource for metropolitan Atlanta is assured. However, the surrounding area continues to face pressures of development, which in turn increases the effect of non-point pollution on the tributaries as well as the river.

At this juncture in its lifespan, the CRNRA and its visiting public can benefit greatly from increasing the visibility and reach of one of the National Park Service's most powerful

tools: interpretation. A strengthened interpretive program – with adequate physical, financial, and staff support – can guide the park to new levels of accomplishment, public awareness, and community support in the next ten years.

In brief, this LRIP recommends key steps in the following areas:

- **outreach**, including targeted community efforts and creation of a dedicated Friends group;
- **facilities**, including bold initiatives to make park interpretation far more accessible to most park visitors;
- **media**, including an array of electronic media approaches as well as traditional print and exhibit materials; and
- **staffing**, through multiple employee categories, to provide the interpretive program with adequate personnel to meet goals and provide high-quality performance.



Volunteers at the park have become an invaluable resource.

Interpretive Outreach

Outreach Recommendation #1: Build Volunteer Committees

- Expand the capacity of the CRNRA interpretive program by forming several targeted committees or task forces chaired by highly motivated, capable volunteers.
 - Recruit several key individuals as volunteer committee chairs for four specific committees, beginning with Outreach, Interpretation and Education, and Administrative Support. (An existing group of trail maintenance volunteers should also be formally recognized in this endeavor.)
 - Working with park management, each working committee could be asked to develop and implement several special projects, setting goals and procedures for the tasks and recruiting additional volunteers. (Potential outreach projects are listed below.)
 - These committees could become the foundation for a future Friends Group for the CRNRA.
- Developing an outreach effort aimed specifically at religious institutions, including those serving immigrant and minority populations, to increase awareness of the CRNRA and its offerings.
- Planning and assisting with activities related to the upcoming National Park Service Centennial Year in 2016.
- Developing and maintaining an up-to-date electronic database of key contacts among community media outlets, multi-cultural organizations, home-owner associations, interest groups (i.e., anglers, kayakers, birders, etc.) and other targeted outreach constituencies.
 - This database can be used in multiple ways, such as newsletter distribution, special events promotion, and river conditions.
 - To be most effective and to respect individuals' privacy concerns, the database should focus on building a distribution network via large list-servs, rather than by individual names.

For example, the Outreach Task Force could move forward quickly on the following special projects with guidance from the interpretive staff:

- Developing a corporate outreach packet for human resources departments of Atlanta-area corporations, promoting the CRNRA as “Atlanta’s Outdoor Fitness Center” and encouraging employees to use and support the park.
 - This outreach effort should include not only large public corporations, but should also seek out privately held and/or minority-owned local companies and state and local government workplaces.
- Create a dedicated Friends Group for the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area.
 - Over time, the organizational and fund-raising abilities of an energetic, high-profile Friends Group can provide significant support (in financial and many other ways) for interpretive programming, staffing, and facilities enhancements at the CRNRA. Such a group is vital if the park is to see its interpretive program grow and expand in the myriad ways envisioned in this plan.
 - A dedicated Friends Group for the CRNRA can do a great deal to enhance the “branding” of the park, differentiate it

Outreach Recommendation #2: Build Volunteer Committees

- from other similarly named organizations, and highlight the park's distinctive mission, needs, and offerings to visitors.
- Despite the current economic climate, the Atlanta metropolitan area remains vigorous, and the north Atlanta river environment has long had many long-time supporters of significant means. After the initial push to create the park, many of these supporters may have mistakenly assumed over the years that the CRNRA no longer needs the community's help.

Outreach Recommendation #3: Start a Bicycle Patrol

- Create a Bicycle Ambassador program to offer interpretation, education, and branding/identity, as well as a visible presence to help encourage positive behaviors by mountain bikers using the Sope Creek/Cochran Shoals trails. [PMIS # 156469]

Outreach Recommendation #4: Promote Safety on the River

- Create short Public Service Announcements (PSAs) promoting safety on the river, and make them available to radio stations throughout the metro area.
 - Because they focus on safety – while also promoting the park – these messages will have a high probability of running at desirable times.
 - Integrating a health/exercise message with the safety message can double the impact of these PSAs.
 - The PSAs should also be created in Spanish and distributed to all Spanish-oriented media outlets.
 - While simple PSAs can be produced with popular computer programs, the Outreach committee should consider approaching a commercial concern to create the PSAs as a pro bono project.
- Consider introducing a limited-range radio broadcast frequency to promote the park and deliver safety messages and other pertinent information.



Cyclist enjoys the trail at Sibley Pond in the Cochran Shoals unit.



Park ranger helps child with her life jacket before heading out in a canoe.

Interpretive Facilities

In the exciting years since its establishment, the physical facilities to support interpretation within the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area have not kept pace with the park's other achievements. Visibility of the interpretive program has suffered as a result.

To date, the primary visitor contact station has been one room of the Hewlett Lodge, a beautiful historic structure of old-growth timbers and massive stone fireplaces. The Hewlett Lodge unit averages 120,000 visitors per year, in comparison to the more popular Cochran Shoals unit, where visitation tops 750,000 per year. Other rooms within Hewlett Lodge have been adapted as CRNRA headquarters office space, and the interpretive staff works in the basement office. With the increased use of seasonal employees and interns, the basement office area has outgrown its capacity.

In addition to its unsuitable location for visitation, the lodge's historic value as a cultural resource precludes extensive adaptation as a modern visitor center. Over the years, the dilemma of whether and how to make Hewlett Lodge a more dynamic, high-traffic focal point for park visitors has remained unresolved.

After in-depth discussions with CRNRA staff and stakeholders, the planning team for this LRIP makes the following set of recommendations – a bold, sequential approach to reconfiguring and expanding the CRNRA's physical facilities for interpretive services. The team believes the following steps are essential to strengthen and support the interpretive program over the long term:



Visitors viewing an interpretive exhibit similar to exhibits possible in a gateway facility.

Interpretive Facilities

Recommendation #1: Improve Visitor Contact Facilities

- Continue to staff and operate the seasonal visitor contact station (introduced in summer 2011) at Powers Island, gradually shifting more functions to this high-traffic, highly visible location. Powers Island is the most popular, best-known river access point in the park, is easily accessible with adequate parking just off I-285, and is a well-established destination and meeting point for CRNRA users throughout the metropolitan area.
 - Within a few years, an existing structure at Johnson Ferry North could be transformed into an engaging, provocative, and educational outdoor exhibit space focusing on the critical role of the Chattahoochee River and its watershed in providing the water supply for greater Atlanta.
- An in-park concession can share the two structures at Powers Island and Johnson Ferry North to provide visitor services such as boat rentals, boating lessons, guided fishing trips, and fishing lessons. The concession staff can educate the public on river safety, water quality, and resource protection, and park-approved interpretive products can be sold at both locations. The shared space can also house park staff, thus providing a visible ranger presence in this high-traffic area.
 - This location would also be a logical place for permanent offices for the park's interpretive staff, as the division of interpretation and education continues to grow and expand.

- Reconfigure the existing Visitor Contact Station at Hewlett Lodge, replacing the bookstore with a comfortable audiovisual viewing room and creating a welcoming, historically appropriate reception area to serve as a gathering/waiting place for headquarters visitors and interpretive historical tours of the building.

Interpretive Facilities

Recommendation #2: Use Interpretive Vehicles

- Acquire and outfit one or more roving interpretive vans staffed by park interpreters. A colorful, eye-catching interpretive van is a rolling advertisement for the park, a portable visitor contact station, a self-contained interpretive exhibit, demonstration, or lab space, an instant “booth” at a community fair, and a proven, comparatively inexpensive way to take interpretation out of the office and into the field, wherever the targeted audience may be.
- Acquire and outfit one or more roving interpretive watercraft. A well-marked, well-equipped boat can be an effective, innovative way to provide valuable interpretive messages, including river safety, to the huge majority of CRNRA visitors who float and swim in the river but rarely encounter park personnel.



Tom Wilson

MARTA bus wrapped with a colorful, eye-catching graphic.

Interpretive Facilities

Recommendation #3: Install Satellite Concessions

- Work with concessionaires to create two or more satellite concession stands/interpretive stations in well-chosen locations within and adjacent to the park. With training and guidance, these satellite stands can perform a number of interpretive and safety functions, from selling “interpretive” and safety products such as personal floatation devices to providing how-to programs, nature-focused boat tours, and more.
 - Two recommended sites for these satellite concessions are the high-traffic areas of Cochran Shoals and Settles Bridge.

Interpretive Facilities

Recommendation #4: Establish Visitor Facilities at Hyde Farm

- In 2011, Cobb County completed the renovation of an existing ranch house adjacent to the Hyde property for use as a future visitor center, including such essentials as bus turnarounds, public restrooms, and ADA-compliant accessibility. The NPS interpretive team should continue to work closely with Cobb County to develop, staff, and program this space.
 - To the extent possible, this facility should serve not only as an interpretive center for Hyde Farm, but also as a welcome center introducing visitors to the entire Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. At a minimum, the Hyde Farm center should clearly identify Hyde Farm as a unit of the CRNRA and stock the full range of printed materials from the park.



Children experience farm chores of the past at historic Hyde Farm.

- As Hyde Farm interpretative programming develops in the coming years, additional facilities in support of interpretation may be required.
 - Future programming will focus on sustainable agriculture and cultural history, most likely in a day-use-only capacity. For example, if Hyde Farm were to be revived as a sustainable vegetable farm for interpretive and educational purposes, the site would need safe, usable facilities for demonstration farming; harvesting, and transporting organic sweet potatoes for sale at community farmer's markets; housing of animals provided by 4-H Club youth; and other activities.

Interpretive Facilities

Recommendation #5: Improve the Chattahoochee River Environmental Education Center (CREEC)

- Continue to enhance the capabilities of the CREEC in support of expanding environmental education programming.
 - Renovation of the restrooms of this 5,500-square-foot facility is in process in 2011. More improvements are necessary to make this former residence more spatially efficient and sustainable in order to accommodate increased demand for the park's environmental education programs.
 - The CREEC is the park's primary location for overnight youth programs focused river ecology and environmental education. As a long-term strategy, continuation of the CREEC in this capacity will complement future development of the Hewlett Lodge as an adult/family-oriented overnight facility.



Since this photograph was taken in 1997, a pavilion has been added to the facility. It is time to upgrade the facility to accommodate its increased use.

Non-Personal Services/ Interpretive Media

Audiovisual Media Recommendations

- Create a concise, hard-hitting water safety program for mandatory use by all concessionaires.
 - To insure consistent messaging, longevity, and acceptable quality, it is strongly recommended that the NPS oversee creation of the core portion of this program, funding it via a line item in concessionaires' contracts if necessary. If desired, individual concessionaires could customize a short tagline segment to supplement the main NPS message.
 - This program can be a relatively low-budget video or multimedia production, perhaps as simple as a short, highly visual PowerPoint with audio produced inhouse.
 - At a minimum, this program should be available in Spanish as well as English. The need for other languages should be assessed at three-year intervals.
- Plan and oversee production of a new orientation film for the CRNRA, along with creation of suitable spaces for visitors to view it. [PMIS 131928, updated in 2010]
 - The CRNRA may wish to explore options for adapting/ excerpting portions of films about the Chattahoochee from Georgia Public Broadcasting and other sources. However, much of the footage of these films, especially the footage from 1995, is out of date.
- With planning, this major orientation film can also be divided into short segments for use on the park website.
- If the Hewlett Lodge bookstore is reconfigured, the new film can be shown in that space on a wide-screen television monitor.
- Identify a list of individuals to interview for oral histories of the CRNRA, prioritize the list, and implement a systematic, sequential method for capturing these unique resources (preferably on video) before opportunities are lost. Recommended topics/sources include:
 - personal recollections and first-hand observations from people who knew the Hyde brothers
 - descendants of other families who owned land along the river before the CRNRA was established
 - recollections from key individuals who helped establish the CRNRA, such as the "River Rats"
 - the accumulated "institutional knowledge" of longtime CRNRA park employees such as Ranger Jerry Hightower
- Plan and create a series of short, downloadable audio programs (podcasts) that support interpretive themes and desired visitor experiences within the CRNRA.
 - A baseline set of audio programs – paralleling a printed series of site bulletins (see page 33) – could use colorful, fun narratives to communicate key messages, taking care to employ audio to its full potential – i.e., for music, sound effects, oral histories, authentic historical texts read by actors, etc., rather than dry voice-over narration.

With planning, these audio programs could be drawn from the ongoing project to capture oral histories of the park. Suggested topics include:

- An enthusiastic canoeist or rafter describing his/her journey down the river through the park – fun, challenges, safety, great views
- A short “Drinking the Chattahoochee” quiz to illustrate how visitors use and depend on the Chattahoochee in their daily lives
- An audio site tour leading visitors through the remains of the paper mill
- A nature hike through the wetlands along the river

Media Recommendations: Social Media

- Update and maintain a CRNRA Facebook page as a vehicle for local publicity and a means of two-way communication/feedback with volunteers and the community.
- Continue to encourage park interns to “tweet” for the park’s Twitter account and to write for its Volunteers in Parks blog.
- Consider creating several short, fun YouTube-style videos on popular topics, perhaps how-to information, on river-related topics or frequently asked questions received by park rangers.

Media Recommendations: Printed Publications

- Move forward with creation and distribution of a regular CRNRA newsletter three times a year, as begun in 2011.
 - Allocate funding to use contractor for print and online production as necessary.
 - Develop email distribution list.
 - Determine appropriate distribution points at places of significant visitor interaction within and adjacent to the park, as well as at partner and concessionaire locations and a small number of other high-traffic tourist-oriented sites in the region.



Social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, will serve as an excellent interpretive tool for the park to reach out to media-connected visitors.

- Plan and create a series of four to six site bulletins on some of the most engaging and important stories supporting the park’s primary themes. Once these site bulletins are completed, the interpretive material can be repurposed as website downloads and/or podcasts as well. At a minimum, the following topics should be covered:
 - The Chattahoochee, its watershed, and its importance in providing water for greater Atlanta
 - Mill ruins along the river
 - Hyde Farm as a surviving example of early 20th-century subsistence farming in rural Georgia
 - Water safety
 - Create a series of sustainable interpretive trail maps on waterproof, tear-resistant paper for the eight park units receiving the most foot and bicycle use. [PMIS # 126741] (accomplishes for trails what the waterproof river guide does for river)
 - Update and continue to produce the waterproof river guide, designed specifically for river users and first introduced in 2009. [PMIS 156425]
 - Develop and print a small brochure about the educational programs offered at historic Hyde Farm. [PMIS # 156483]
- Media Recommendations:**
- Exterior exhibits and wayfinding**
- Upgrade and improve placement of the existing three-sided interpretive kiosks at each unit throughout the park.
 - The orientation maps in these kiosks need to be updated to reflect boundary changes and new facilities in the park.
 - If these kiosks are retained, many need to be relocated within their respective sites so that visitors can see and read them more easily.
 - If these kiosks are retained, they should be repainted to coordinate with other park signs to improve the overall “look” of river entry areas as less cluttered and more welcoming for visitors.
 - In 2011, the Chattahoochee River NRA was chosen to participate in an NPS initiative called Designing the Parks with a team of landscape architecture students from the University of Georgia College of Environment and Design. Park staff will collaborate with the student team on this two-year project, which is expected to address a range of design issues throughout the CRNRA. Depending on the team’s recommendations and future funding, the possibilities and placements for future interpretive messaging at river access points could change significantly.

- Create/update the park's comprehensive wayside exhibit plan.
 - Plan future wayside exhibits strategically, building off the six new signs installed in 2011, with the goal of having at least one or two signs in the park addressing each primary theme developed in this LRIP.
 - At present, existing waysides (including the 2011 installations) focus on cultural history; few if any wayside signs in the park currently interpret the biology, botany, watersheds, or riparian ecology of the region.
 - Incorporate relevant Designing the Park recommendations into the wayside plan.
 - Explore options and costs for developing interpretive waysides and/or a podcast or cell-phone tour to provide visitors with a self-guided site tour of Hyde Farm.
 - Reevaluate the wayside plan at five-year intervals.

Media Recommendations: Interior exhibits

A reconfigured, permanent CRNRA Visitor Contact Station at the high-traffic Powers Island location offers great potential. An innovative river-focused exhibit space – open-air but under a roof – at this location could serve as a unique addition to the visitor experiences available to outdoor recreationists and their families in the CRNRA, in greater Atlanta, and far beyond. Such an exhibit space could offer a unique, highly informative and unbiased look at water and water use in the southeastern U.S. – an area only beginning to confront the possible consequences of inadequate water supplies for a burgeoning population. While this concept will require further study – and significant funding – the possibilities should be explored.

In addition to consideration of this exhibit installation at a newly configured structure at Powers Island, this plan recommends the following:

- Develop several small, self-contained topical exhibits to fit within the proposed roving interpretive van.
- Develop several small, self-contained topical exhibits, primarily oriented toward water safety and water ecology, to fit within the proposed roving interpretive boat.
- Work with Cobb County as needed to assist in developing exhibits for the Hyde Farm visitor station.

Media Recommendations: Media Library

- Create and maintain a media library consisting of current and historical materials such as film-based and digital photographs, audiotapes, graphics and illustrations, and videos that will be useful to interpreters in developing future programs.
- Continue process of transferring old media onto new media (DVDs) to ensure its maintenance and preservation.

Personal Services

NPS visitor surveys repeatedly confirm that visitors appreciate personal interpretive services and rank encounters with park interpreters as among their favorite aspects of visiting a park. The CRNRA has a long tradition of providing popular interpretive programs, but given the geography of the park, the reach of these programs is limited.

The following personal services recommendations are designed to enhance the practical relevance of interpretive programs – primarily through adding safety messaging – as well as increase the visibility of trained interpreters at strategic locations throughout the CRNRA.

Personal Services Recommendation #1: Enlist interpreters to improve river safety.

- Develop a short “pocket program” with consistent messaging on river safety for use by roving interpreters, concession personnel, volunteer groups such as the Bicycle Ambassadors, educational staff, and others.
 - Over time, wide distribution of a short, memorable safety message – perhaps reduced to a simple slogan or acronym – should become thoroughly integrated into all staff interactions with visitors.
 - If reiterated consistently throughout the park through personal interpretive services as well as supporting media, a simple slogan like “Water is COLD and RISES FAST” can help keep river safety top-of-mind among CRNRA visitors, whatever their activities in the park.



First-time campers learn how to pitch a tent for a good night's rest.

**Personal Services Recommendation
#2: Enhance roving interpretation.**

- Increase the use of roving interpreters during peak times at the park's most heavily visited sites.
 - These interpreters may be a combination of permanent staff, seasonal staff, or partners, volunteers, or concessionaires who have received appropriate interpretive training.
 - At least some roving interpreters should be bilingual in English and Spanish.
 - Some roving interpreters may work from a specially equipped interpretive van or boat, but most roving interpretation should be conducted independent of specialty vehicles.
 - Suggested sites for roving interpretation include:
 - Cochran Shoals
 - Sope Creek
 - Paces Mill (especially bilingual)
 - Sandy Beach/Sandy Point
 - Settles Bridge
 - Abbotts Bridge
 - Bowman's Island
 - Palisades (East and West)
 - Jones Bridge

**Personal Services Recommendation
#3: Provide interpretive programming at Johnsons Ferry.**

- As the Johnsons Ferry Visitor Contact Station becomes more firmly established, the interpretive team should evaluate relevant topics and present regularly scheduled interpreter-led walks from this location.
 - Reevaluate the number and topics of programs seasonally to determine the most effective use of limited staff.

**Personal Services Recommendation
#4: Provide interpretive programming at Powers Island.**

- As the Powers Island Visitor Contact Station becomes more firmly established, the interpretive team should evaluate relevant topics and present regularly scheduled interpreter-led walks from this location.
 - Reevaluate the number and topics of programs seasonally to determine the most effective use of limited staff.

**Personal Services Recommendation
#5: Enhance programming for Hyde Farm**

- Continue to develop and expand interpretive and educational programming for Hyde Farm.
 - While much depends on future funding from Cobb County and the NPS, this unique cultural landscape of historic farming offers tremendous potential for both adult and youth programming on a wide range of topics.
 - A Development Concept Plan will greatly aid interpreters in developing future programs for this site.

Personal Services Recommendation**#6: Help train non-NPS interpreters.**

- Whenever appropriate, the NPS interpretive team should seek to provide interpretive guidance to its concessionaires, partner organizations, and volunteers.
 - With help from its Friends Groups, the NPS interpretive team could host an annual half-day “interpreters’ open house” each spring, featuring informal discussions and a few short workshop-style interpretive training tips, to keep lines of communication open and show support for all volunteers, partners, and concessionaires who interact with visitors within the park.

The NPS team should regularly share news and resources about interpretation with the CRNRA community. Such information may include links to online courses from The Eppley Institute, regional and national NAI workshops, the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia, new research on effective interpretation, and similar activities.



Park VIPs provide assistance during educational programs.

Research Needs in Support of Interpretation

- A Development Concept Plan is needed for Hyde Farm to help chart the property's future interpretive uses. This document will complement and build upon two existing documents, the Hyde Farm Cultural Landscape Report and the Power-Hyde House Historic Structure Report (both completed December 2011).
- A CRNRA Administrative History document should be researched and compiled within the next few years, while first-person memories of the formation of the park are still obtainable.
- The park should begin to acquire and archive a specific historical photo collection devoted to the river corridor, similar to the Vanishing Georgia series.
- Further research is needed on the historical landowners along the river, such as the Collins and Powers families, to document and interpret the cultural history of the park.

Working with a local university, the park should make itself available as host or co-sponsor of a symposium to spur additional research on the history of the area. Depending on the level of scholarship generated, the papers could be published individually in history journals or collected and edited as a book or monograph.

Equipment Needs in Support of Interpretation

To maximize efficiency and keep costs at a minimum, the interpretive staff of the CRNRA needs the following media equipment:

- A computer-compatible projector and screen
- A light-weight, handheld video camera
- A video "flip camera" with tripod
- A high-quality digital camera
- Several small point-and-shoot digital cameras
- Several high-capacity external hard drives



Historic photograph of the Partridge Family visiting the river.

Staffing Recommendations

Over the next ten years, the planning team envisions dramatic changes in the CRNRA's interpretive facilities and visibility with the public: a relocated focus for visitor interactions, more roving interpreters, and two traveling interpretive vehicles, one on land and one on water. At present, the interpretive team consists of four permanent employees and one seasonal employee. The office also has several visitor use assistants (VUAs) whose primary function is to operate the fee program. The CRNRA currently has no administrative support dedicated specifically to interpretation.

In order to accomplish the interpretive vision set forth in this document, an ideal staffing level includes the following:

- 3 permanent interpretive staff members at a greatly expanded, permanent interpretive center at Powers Island
- 3 seasonal employees (1 supervisor and 2 staff) for operation of the Johnsons Ferry Visitor Contact Station during the summers
- 1 volunteer coordinator (already existing)
- 2 Teacher-Ranger-Teachers
- 3 additional seasonal employees
- Adjustment in the roles of visitor use assistants to incorporate interpretive duties
- Addition of an administrative support position dedicated to interpretation

In total, this plan recommends nine permanent interpretive staff members and six seasonal employees.



Rangers in uniform complement the interpretive programming at the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area.

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this report has been formatted to be printed double-sided in an effort to save paper



Implementation Guide

Implementing the recommendations in this Long-Range Interpretive Plan will be a gradual process, and park decision makers should feel free to reevaluate and make adjustments in the plan as circumstances change. This implementation guide is designed to help the CRNRA set priorities and make concrete, measurable progress toward strengthening and expanding its interpretive program over the next ten years.

The chart on the following pages presents step-by-step sequences for each major category of recommendations. Indicators (xx) mark each action as short-term (within the next three years), mid-term (within the next four to seven years), or long-term (seven to ten years away). Entries with indicators across all three timeframes should be considered as continuous, ongoing activities.

The cost projection column provides a rough estimate of the projected costs of each recommendation. The symbol \$ estimates a moderate annual cost (under \$50,000); the \$\$ indicates annual expenditures estimated between \$50,000 and \$100,000; and the \$\$\$ indicates major expenditures, usually capital expenditures such as facilities remodeling, exhibit installations, visitor transportation vehicles, etc.

The theme column illustrates the connection to the interpretive themes.

Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Short-, Medium-, and Long-term Implementation Guide					
INTERPRETIVE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS	Short-term 1-3 yrs (2011-13)	Mid-term 4-6 yrs (2014-16)	Long-term 7-10 yrs (2017-21)	Cost Projection	Theme Addressed
Outreach Recommendations					
Outreach Recommendation # 1: Volunteer Committees					
Expand interpretive capacity with volunteer committees in Outreach, Interpretation and Education, and Administrative Support for special projects.	XX			\$	1
Use Outreach committee to develop a corporate outreach packet promoting the CRNRA as “Atlanta’s Outdoor Fitness Center” for corporate employees.	XX			\$	1
Use Outreach committee to develop outreach efforts aimed at religious institutions, including those serving immigrant and minority populations.	XX			\$	1
Use Outreach committee to assist in activities for NPS Centennial in 2016.	XX	XX		\$	1
Use Outreach committee to develop and maintain an electronic database to target outreach constituencies.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1
Outreach Recommendation # 2: A Friends Group					
Enlisting the volunteer committees as the foundation, guide the formation of a new Friends Group for the CRNRA.	XX			\$	1
Outreach Recommendation # 3: A Bicycle Patrol					
With the NPS providing interpretive and safety training, launch a volunteer Bicycle Ambassadors patrol to provide more interpretive and safety presence on the mountain biking trails.	XX			\$	1-4
Outreach Recommendation # 4: River Safety					
Create Public Service Announcements promoting river safety and health for wide distribution to local radio stations.	XX			\$	1
Seek a commercial firm to produce the PSAs as a pro bono project for the CRNRA.	XX			\$	1
Consider a limited-range radio frequency to promote the park and deliver safety messages and other park information.	XX			\$	1
Explore other creative ways to promote river safety, including in park restrooms and local bus stops.	XX			\$	1

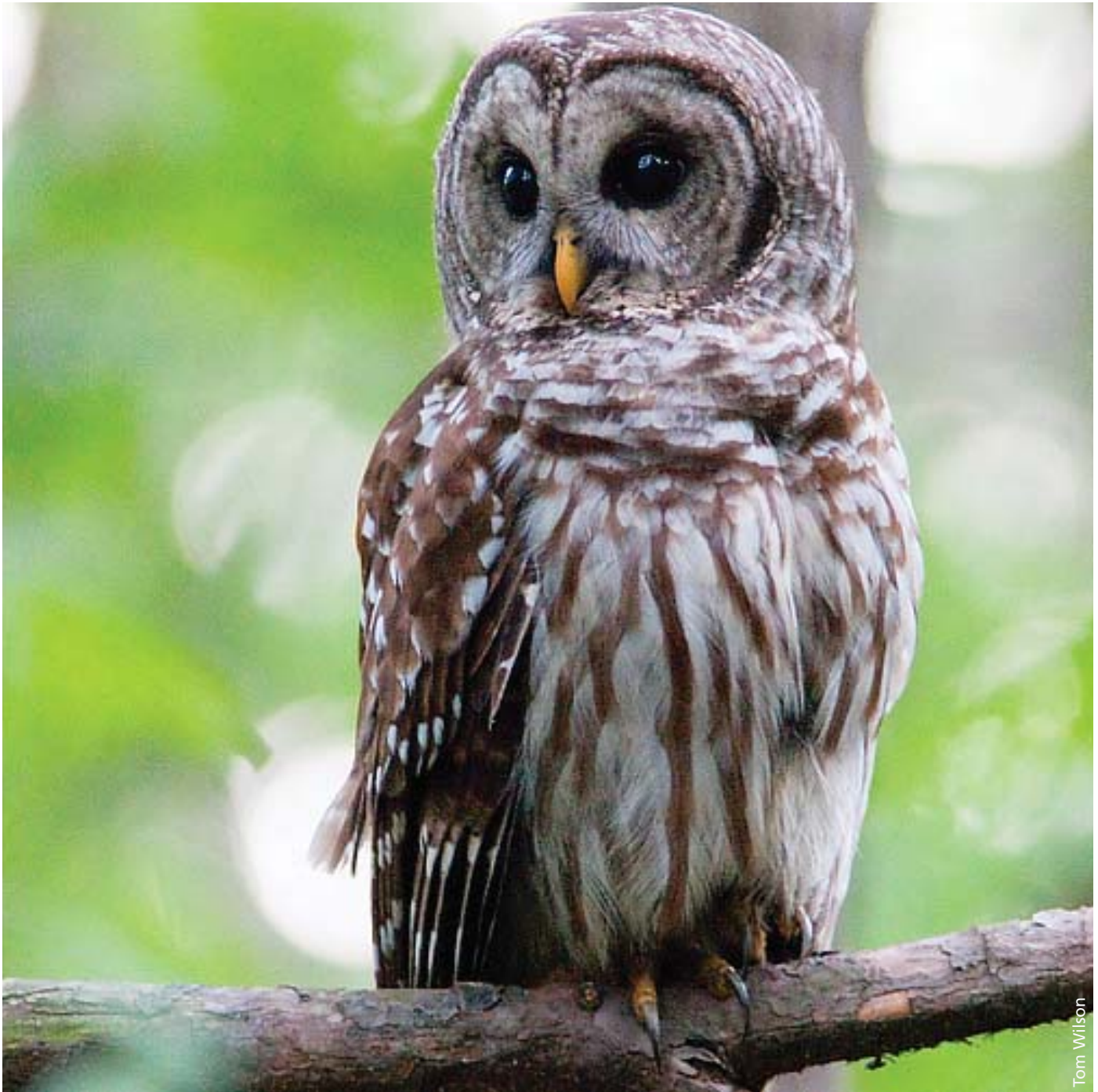
Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Short-, Medium-, and Long-term Implementation Guide					
INTERPRETIVE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS	Short-term 1-3 yrs (2011-13)	Mid-term 4-6 yrs (2014-16)	Long-term 7-10 yrs (2017-21)	Cost Projection	Theme Addressed
Interpretive Facilities Recommendations					
Facilities Recommendation # 1: Visitor Contact Facilities					
Continue the Powers Island seasonal Visitor Contact Stations opened in 2011.	XX	XX	XX	\$\$	1-4
Upgrade the Powers Island seasonal Visitor Contact Station opened in 2011 to a permanent facility with office and storage space for the interpretive staff.		XX	XX	\$\$\$	1-4
Reconfigure the existing Visitor Contact Station in Hewlett Lodge to a reception area, replacing the bookstore with an audiovisual viewing space.		XX	XX	\$\$	1-4
Explore creating a major open-air exhibit installation at Powers Island.		XX	XX	\$\$	1-4, especially 2
Facilities Recommendation # 2: Interpretive Vehicles					
Acquire and outfit a roving interpretive van.		XX		\$\$	1-4
Acquire and outfit a roving interpretive/safety watercraft.		XX		\$\$	1-4
Facilities Recommendation # 3: Satellite Concessions					
Work with concessionaires to create two or more satellite concessions in the park to augment NPS and partner interpretive and safety efforts.		XX		\$\$	1-4
Facilities Recommendation # 4: Visitor Facilities at Hyde Farm					
Work with Cobb County to develop the Hyde Farm visitor center.	XX	XX		\$\$	3
Work with Cobb County to develop future Hyde Farm facilities in support of interpretation, such as an organic farming program.		XX		\$\$\$	3
Facilities Recommendation # 5: The Chattahoochee River Environmental Education Center (CREEC)					
Continue the renovations to the CREEC to expand environmental educational programming.	XX	XX		\$\$\$	1, 2, 4
As other facilities are developed in the park, concentrate resources to establish the CREEC as the primary location for overnight youth programs for river ecology.		XX		\$\$	

Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Short-, Medium-, and Long-term Implementation Guide					
INTERPRETIVE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS	Short-term 1-3 yrs (2011-13)	Mid-term 4-6 yrs (2014-16)	Long-term 7-10 yrs (2017-21)	Cost Projection	Theme Addressed
Personal Services Recommendations					
Personal Services Recommendation # 1: River Safety					
Create a short, consistent interpretive program on river safety and make it available to everyone who works with visitors: professional interpreters, partners, volunteers, concessionaires, and general staff.	XX			\$	1, 3
Over time, integrate and “institutionalize” this safety message among all who work in and with the park.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1, 3
Over time, use this simple messaging to keep river safety top-of-mind for all who visit the park.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1, 3
Personal Services Recommendation # 2: Roving					
Increase use of roving interpreters during peak times at heavily visited sites.	XX	XX	XX	\$\$	1-4
At selected sites, introduce roving interpreters who are fluent in Spanish.	XX	XX	XX	\$\$	1-4
Personal Services Recommendation # 3: Programming at Johnsons Ferry					
As the Johnsons Ferry Visitor Contact Station becomes established, introduce scheduled interpretive programs at this location.	XX			\$	1-4
Reevaluate topics, frequency, and approach seasonally to determine most effective use of limited staff.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1-4
Personal Services Recommendation # 4: Programming at Powers Island					
As the Powers Island Visitor Contact Station becomes established, introduce scheduled interpretive programs at this location.	XX				1-4
Reevaluate topics, frequency, and approach seasonally to determine most effective use of limited staff.	XX				1-4
When the Powers Island Visitor Contact Station becomes a permanent facility, introduce additional interpretive programming within and from this facility.		XX	XX	\$\$	1-4
When the Powers Island Visitor Contact Station begins to develop exhibits, allocate interpretive staff time to work with exhibit developers on the project.		XX	XX	\$\$	1-4, especially 2
Personal Services Recommendation # 5: Programming at Hyde Farm					
Continue to develop and expand interpretive and educational programming at Hyde Farm.	XX	XX	XX	\$\$	3
Personal Services Recommendation # 6: Training					
As the CRNRA’s interpretive capacity grows, offer interpretive guidance and resources to non-NPS personnel working in interpretation.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1-4

Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Short-, Medium-, and Long-term Implementation Guide					
INTERPRETIVE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS	Short-term 1-3 yrs (2011-13)	Mid-term 4-6 yrs (2014-16)	Long-term 7-10 yrs (2017-21)	Cost Projection	Theme Addressed
Non-Personal Services/Interpretive Media					
Audiovisual Media Recommendations					
Create a water safety audiovisual program for mandatory use by concessionaires.	XX			\$	1
Plan and oversee production of a new orientation film for use in the CRNRA and by partners and concessionaires.		XX		\$	1-4
Explore options for dividing this new video into segments to run on the park website.		XX		\$	
Create viewing spaces for this film throughout the park, using large flat-screen TV monitors in all Visitor Contact Stations.		XX		\$	
Identify and prioritize individuals for oral histories and launch a systematic, sequential method for capturing these resources.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1-4
Plan and create a series of short, downloadable audio programs (podcasts) on a selected list of natural and cultural history topics based on the park's primary themes.	XX			\$	1-4
Reassess technology-dependent interpretive materials such as podcasts and other downloadable applications every three years regarding new delivery methods/software integration.	XX				
Social Media Recommendations					
Update and maintain a CRNRA Facebook page as a two-way communication tool with visitors and supporters of the park.	XX			\$	1-4
Continue to feed the park's Twitter account, with periodic evaluation of audience and effectiveness.	XX			\$	1-4
Consider creating short YouTube-style videos on popular topics at the park.	XX			\$	1-4
To the extent possible, monitor, expand, and correct online information about the park from non-CRNRA sources such as Wikipedia or local tourism sites.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1-4
To the extent possible, track and respond or update online reviews and seek to add positive mentions of the park at online tourist sites.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1-4
Virtual/Web Media Recommendations					
Continue to enhance and enrich the CRNRA website, adding recommended podcasts, site bulletins, video, and photographs as they are developed.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1-4
Consider adding a gallery of historic photographs to the website as the historic collection is developed.		XX		\$	1-4
Develop a regular schedule for website maintenance and updates.	XX			\$	1-4

Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Short-, Medium-, and Long-term Implementation Guide					
INTERPRETIVE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS	Short-term 1-3 yrs (2011-13)	Mid-term 4-6 yrs (2014-16)	Long-term 7-10 yrs (2017-21)	Cost Projection	Theme Addressed
Print Publications Recommendations					
Move ahead on the creation and distribution of a regular CRNRA newsletter three times a year.	XX	XX	XX	\$\$	1-4
Plan and create a series of four to six site bulletins with interesting stories in support of the park's primary themes.		XX	XX	\$	
Create sustainable trail maps on waterproof paper for 8 park units	XX			\$\$	1-4
Update the waterproof river guide introduced in 2009.	XX			\$	1, 2, 4
Develop a brochure about educational programs at Hyde Farm.	XX			\$	3
Add web links to all future print publications and explore the use of QR codes.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1-4
Exterior Exhibits Recommendations					
Upgrade and reposition the existing three-sided interpretive kiosks at river entry points.	XX		XX	\$\$	1-4
Work with the Designing the Parks team on improving the park's environmental design, including wayfinding and potential interpretive wayside opportunities.	XX			\$	1-4
Explore options for a self-guided tour of Hyde Farm via interpretive waysides, cell phone, or podcast.	XX				3
Update/create a comprehensive wayside exhibit plan for the park.		XX		\$\$	1-4
Interior Exhibits Recommendations					
Explore options for creating an innovative open-air, roofed exhibit space at Powers Island focused on key water concerns for the Chattahoochee and the region.		XX	XX	\$\$\$	2
Develop exhibits to fit into the roving interpretive van.		XX		\$	1-4
Develop exhibits to fit into the roving interpretive watercraft.		XX		\$	1-4
Work with Cobb County as needed to develop exhibits for the visitor facilities at Hyde Farm.	XX			\$	3
Media Library Recommendations					
Create a media library of current and historical media to support potential interpretation.	XX			\$\$	1-4
Continue transferring old media to new, more stable media.	XX	XX	XX	\$	1-4

Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Short-, Medium-, and Long-term Implementation Guide					
INTERPRETIVE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS	Short-term 1-3 yrs (2011-13)	Mid-term 4-6 yrs (2014-16)	Long-term 7-10 yrs (2017-21)	Cost Projection	Theme Addressed
Research Needs in Support of Interpretation					
Seek funding for a Development Concept Plan for Hyde Farm.	XX			\$	3
Begin an historical photo collection devoted to the Chattahoochee River corridor.	XX			\$	1-4
Seek funding for an NPS Administrative History for the CRNRA.	XX			\$	1-4
Seek opportunities for further research on the historic landowners along the river.		XX		\$	3
Work with a local university to host or co-sponsor a symposium on local history in the area.		XX		\$\$	3
Equipment Needs in Support of Interpretation					
A computer-compatible projector and screen.	XX			\$	1-4
A video camera and/or a flip camera.	XX			\$	1-4
A high-quality digital camera.	XX			\$	1-4
Several small point-and-shoot digital cameras.	XX			\$	1-4
Staffing Needs for Interpretation					
Add 3 seasonal employees to staff the Visitor Contact Station.	XX			\$\$	1-4
Move interpretive staff offices and assign 3 permanent interpretive staff to the newly developed permanent visitor center at Powers Island.		XX	XX	\$\$\$	
Add 2 Teacher-Ranger-Teachers to the interpretive staff.	XX	XX		\$\$	
Add 3 additional seasonal employees to assist with roving interpretation, staffing of the interpretive vehicles, and other duties.		XX	XX		
Add an administrative support position for interpretation.		XX		\$\$	



Tom Wilson

Appendices

Appendix A: Legislation

92 STAT. 474

PUBLIC LAW 95-344—AUG. 15, 1978

Public Law 95-344 95th Congress

An Act

Aug. 15, 1978
[H.R. 8336]

To authorize the establishment of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Chattahoochee
River National
Recreation Area,
Ga.
Establishment.
16 USC 4601.

TITLE I

Publication in
Federal Register.

SEC. 101. The Congress finds the natural, scenic, recreation, historic, and other values of a forty-eight-mile segment of the Chattahoochee River and certain adjoining lands in the State of Georgia from Buford Dam downstream to Peachtree Creek are of special national significance, and that such values should be preserved and protected from developments and uses which would substantially impair or destroy them. In order to assure such preservation and protection for public benefit and enjoyment, there is hereby established the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (hereinafter referred to as the "recreation area"). The recreation area shall consist of the river and its bed together with the lands, waters, and interests therein within the boundary generally depicted on the map entitled "Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area", numbered CHAT-20,000, and dated July 1976, which shall be on file and available for public inspection in the office of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Following reasonable notice in writing to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives and to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate of his intention to do so, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") may, by publication of a revised map or other boundary description in the Federal Register, (1) make minor revisions in the boundary of the recreation area, and (2) revise the boundary to facilitate access to the recreation area, or to delete lands which would be of little or no benefit to the recreation area due to the existence of valuable improvements completely constructed prior to the date of enactment of this Act. The total area, exclusive of the river and its bed, within the recreation area may not exceed six thousand three hundred acres.

Land acquisition.
16 USC 4601-1.

SEC. 102. (a) Within the recreation area the Secretary is authorized to acquire lands, waters, and interests therein by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange. Property owned by the State of Georgia or any political subdivision thereof may be acquired only by donation.

(b) When a tract of land lies partly within and partly without the boundaries of the recreation area, the Secretary may acquire the entire tract by any of the above methods in order to avoid the payment of severance costs. Land so acquired outside of the boundaries of the recreation area may be exchanged by the Secretary for non-Federal land within such boundaries, and any portion of the land not utilized for such exchanges may be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 471 et seq.).

XIV. NATIONAL RECREATION AREAS

1. Chattahoochee River

PUBLIC LAW 98-568—OCT. 30, 1984

98 STAT. 2928

Public Law 98-568

98th Congress

An Act

To amend the Act of August 15, 1978, regarding the Chattahoochee River
National Recreation Area in the State of Georgia.

Oct. 30, 1984
[H.R. 2645]

Be it enacted be the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That (a) section 101 of the Act of August 15, 1978, entitled "An Act to authorize the establishment of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes" (Public Law 95-344; 16 U.S.C. 460ii) is amended by adding the following at the end thereof: "For purposes of facilitating Federal technical and other support to State and local governments to assist State and local efforts to protect the scenic, recreational, and natural values of a 2,000 foot wide corridor adjacent to each bank of the Chattahoochee River and its impoundments in the 48-mile segment referred to above, such corridor is hereby declared to be an area of national concern. "

(b) Section 101 of such Act is amended—

(1) by striking out "numbered CHAT-20,000, and dated July 1976" and substituting "numbered CHAT-20,003, and dated September 1984"; and

16 USC 460ii.

(2) by striking out "six thousand three hundred acres" and substituting "approximately 6,800 acres".

(c) Section 102 of such Act is amended by adding the following at the end thereof:

16 USC 460ii-1.

"(f)(1) The Secretary shall exchange those federally owned lands identified on the map referenced in section 101 of this Act as 'exchange lands' for non-Federal lands which are within the boundaries of the recreation area. The values of the lands exchanged under this subsection shall be equal, or shall be equalized in the same manner as provided in section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

Public lands.

"(2) At three year intervals after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a progress report on the land exchanges which have taken place and the exchanges which are likely to take place under the authority of this subsection. Such report shall identify the lands which are unsuitable for exchange pursuant to such authority.

Federal Register, publication. Report.

98 STAT. 2928

PUBLIC LAW 98-568—OCT. 30, 1984

Termination.

“(3) Effective on the date ten years after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the exchange authority of paragraph (1) shall terminate. The exchange lands identified under paragraph (1) which have not been exchanged prior to such date shall be retained in Federal ownership as a part of the recreation area.

“(4) The Secretary shall publish a revision of the boundary map referred to in section 101 to exclude from the boundaries of the recreation area any exchange lands which are used to acquire non-Federal lands under paragraph (3).”.

16 USC 460ii-3.

(d) Section 104 of such Act is amended by adding the following at the end thereof:

98 STAT. 2929
Public lands.

“(d)(1) Notwithstanding any other authority of law, any department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States or of the state of Georgia, or any other entity which may construct any project recommended in the study entitled ‘Metropolitan Atlanta Water Resources Management Study, Georgia: Report of Chief of Engineers,’ dated June 1, 1982, which directly adversely impacts any lands within the authorized recreation boundaries of the Bowman’s Island tract as shown on the map numbered and dated CHAT-20,003, September 1984, which were in Federal ownership as of September 1, 1984, shall, upon request by the Secretary, mitigate such adverse impacts. It is expressly provided that use of or adverse impact upon any other lands within the recreation area as result of any such project shall not require mitigation. Mitigation required by this paragraph shall be provided by payment to the United States of a sum not to exceed \$3,200,000. The mitigation funds paid pursuant to this paragraph shall be utilized by the Secretary for the acquisition of replacement lands. Such replacement lands shall be acquired only after consultation with the Governor of Georgia.

“(2) In acquiring replacement lands under paragraph (1) priority shall be given to acquisition of lands within the recreation area boundary and those lands within or adjacent to the 2,000 foot wide corridor referred to in section 101. Any lands acquired pursuant to this subsection lying outside the boundaries of the recreation area shall, upon acquisition, be included within the recreation area and transferred to the Secretary for management under this Act. The Secretary shall publish a revised boundary map to include any lands added to the recreation area pursuant to this subsection.

“(3) If lands as described in paragraph (2) are not available for acquisition, other lands within the State of Georgia may be acquired as replacement lands under paragraph (1) if such lands are transferred to the State of Georgia for permanent management for public outdoor recreation.”.

NATIONAL RECREATION AREAS

401

PUBLIC LAW 98-568—OCT. 30, 1984

98 STAT. 2929

(e)(1) Section 105(a) of such Act is amended by striking out “\$72,900,000” and substituting “\$79,400,000” and by adding the following at the end thereof: “For purposes of section 7(a)(3) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601–9(a)(3)), the statutory ceiling on appropriations under this subsection shall be deemed to be a statutory ceiling contained in a provision of law enacted prior to the convening of the Ninety-sixth Congress.”.

16 USC 460ii-4.

(2) Section 105(c) of such Act is amended by striking out “three years” and substituting “seven years”.

(3) Section 105 of such Act is further amended by adding the following new subsection at the end thereof:

“(d)(1) Whenever any Federal department, agency, or instrumentality proposes to undertake any action, or provide Federal assistance for any action, or issue any license or permit for an action within the corridor referred to in section 101 which may have a direct and adverse effect on the natural or cultural resources of the recreation area, the head of such department, agency, or instrumentality shall—

“(A) promptly notify the Secretary of the action at the time it is planning the action, preparing an environmental assessment regarding the action, or preparing an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 for the action;

42 USC 4321 note.

“(B) provide the Secretary a reasonable opportunity to comment and make recommendations regarding the effect of the Federal action on the natural and cultural resources of the recreation area; and

98 STAT. 2930

“(C) notify the Secretary of the specific decisions made in respect to the comments and recommendations of the Secretary.

The requirements of this subsection shall be carried out in accordance with procedures established by the Federal agency responsible for undertaking or approving the Federal action. These procedures may utilize the procedures developed by such Agency pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

42 USC 4321 note.

“(2) Following receipt of notification pursuant to paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary, after consultation with the Governor of Georgia, shall make such comments and recommendations as the Secretary deems appropriate pursuant to paragraph (1)(B) as promptly as practicable in accordance with the notifying agency's procedures established pursuant to paragraph (1)(A). In any instance in which the Secretary does not provide comments and recommendations under paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall notify in writing, the appropriate committees of Congress.

“(3) Following receipt of the notifying agency's decisions pursuant to paragraph (1)(C), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress, including the authorizing committees with primary jurisdiction for the program under which the proposed action is being taken, a copy of the notifying agency's specific decisions made pursuant to paragraph (1)(C), along with a copy of the comments and recommendations made pursuant to paragraph (1)(B).

“(4) In any instance in which the Secretary has not been notified of a Federal agency's proposed action within the corridor, and on his or her own determination finds that such action may have a significant adverse effect on the natural or cultural resources of the recreation area, the Secretary shall notify the head of such Federal agency in writing. Upon such notification by the Secretary, such agency shall promptly comply with the provisions of subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of paragraph (1) of this subsection.

“(5) Each agency or instrumentality of the United States conducting Federal action upon federally owned lands or waters which are administered by the Secretary and which are located within the authorized boundary of the recreation area shall not commence such action until such time as the Secretary has concurred in such action.

“(6) The following Federal actions which constitute a major and necessary component of an emergency action shall be exempt from the provisions of this subsection—

“(A) those necessary for safeguarding of life and property;

“(B) those necessary to respond to a declared state of disaster;

“(C) those necessary to respond to an imminent threat to national security; and

“(D) those that the Secretary has determined to be not inconsistent with the general management plan for the recreation area.

Actions which are part of a project recommended in the study entitled ‘Metropolitan Atlanta Water Resources Management Study, Georgia: Report of Chief of Engineers’, dated June 1, 1982, and any Federal action which pertains to the control of air space, which is regulated under the Clean Air Act, or which is required for maintenance or rehabilitation of existing structures or facilities shall also be exempt from the provisions of this subsection.”.

(f) Title I of such Act is amended by adding the following at the end thereof:

“SEC. 106. (a) There is hereby established the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Advisory Commission (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the ‘Advisory Commission’) to advise the Secretary regarding the management and operation of the area, protection of resources with the recreation area, and the priority of lands to be acquired within the recreation area. The Advisory Commission shall be composed of the following thirteen voting members appointed by the Secretary:

16 USC 460ii-5.
Chattahoochee
River National
Recreation Area
Advisory
Commission,
establishment.

“(1) four members appointed from among individuals recommended by local governments—

“(A) one of whom shall be recommended by the Board of County Commissioners of Forsyth County;

“(B) one of whom shall be recommended by the Board of County Commissioners of Fulton County;

“(C) one of whom shall be recommended by the Board of County Commissioners of Cobb County; and

“(D) one of whom shall be recommended by the Board of County Commissioners of Gwinnett County;

“(2) one member appointed from among individuals recommended by the Governor of Georgia;

“(3) one member appointed from among individuals recommended by the Atlanta Regional Commission;

“(4) four members appointed from among individuals recommended by a coalition of citizens public interest groups, recreational users, and environmental organizations concerned with the protection and preservation of the Chattahoochee River;

“(5) one member appointed from among individuals recommended by the Business Council of Georgia or by a local chamber of commerce in the vicinity of the recreation area; and

“(6) two members who represent the general public, at least one of whom shall be a resident of one of the counties referred to in paragraph (1).

In addition, the Park Superintendent for the recreation area shall serve as a nonvoting member of the Advisory Commission. The Advisory Commission shall designate one of its members as Chairman.

“(b)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), members of the Advisory Commission shall serve for terms of three years. Any voting member of the Advisory Commission may be reappointed for one additional three-year term.

“(2) The members first appointed under paragraph (1) shall serve for a term of one year. The members first appointed under paragraphs (2), (3), (5), and (6) shall serve for a term of two years.

404

NATIONAL RECREATION AREAS

98 STAT. 2931

PUBLIC LAW 98-568—OCT. 30, 1984

“(c) The Advisory Commission shall meet on a regular basis. Notice of meetings and agenda shall be published in local newspapers which have a distribution which generally covers the area affected by the park. Commission meetings shall be held at locations and in such a manner as to insure adequate public involvement.

“(d) Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation as such, but the Secretary may pay expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their responsibilities under this Act on vouchers signed by the Chairman.

“(e) The Advisory Commission shall terminate on the date ten years after the date of the enactment of this subsection.”.

98 STAT. 2932
Effective date.
16 USC 460ii
note.

SEC. 2. Any provision of any amendment made by this Act which, directly or indirectly, authorizes the enactment of new budget authority described in section 402(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 shall be effective only for fiscal years beginning after September 30, 1984.

Approved October 30, 1984.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 2645:

HOUSE REPORT No. 98-607 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).

SENATE REPORT No. 98-633 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 130 (1984):

Mar. 5, considered and passed House.

Oct. 3, considered and passed Senate, amended.

Oct. 4, House concurred in Senate amendments.

Appendix B: Planning Team

National Park Service

Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area

Patty Wissinger
Park Superintendent

Nancy Walther
Chief of Resource Education, Partnerships, and Business Services

Jerry Hightower, Park Ranger, Interpretation
Tywannia Howells, Administrative Officer
John Huth, Park Ranger, Interpretation
Richard Lutz, Facility Management Specialist
Larisa Nachman, Seasonal Interpretive Ranger
Allyson Read, Biologist
Rick Slade, Chief of Resource Planning and Professional Services
Edie Sparks, Acting Deputy Superintendent
Marjorie Thomas, Education Specialist
Kelly Westbrook, Acting Secretary
Scott Pfeninger, Chief of Park Operations
Frank Ouellette, Acting Business Fee Manager

Other NPS Attendees

Tommy Jones, Architectural Historian
NPS Southeastern Regional Office

Peggy Scherbaum Interpretive Planner and Contracting Officer's Representative
Harpers Ferry Center

Partner and Stakeholder Participants

Joni Atkinson, Cobb County Parks & Recreation
Michael Bartell, park volunteer
Rachel Barton, Chattahoochee Nature Center
Julie Burroughs, park volunteer; educator
Susan Castor, park volunteer; educator
Maureen Donohue, park volunteer
Cindy Hosseini, Triage Consulting Firm
John Kohler, park volunteer
Dyna Kohler, park volunteer
Lynn LaBudde, Boy Scouts of America (retired); park volunteer
Lynn McIntyre, Chattahoochee Nature Center
Cynthia Patterson, park volunteer
Bonnie Putney, Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper
Chris Scalley, River through Atlanta Guide Service
James "Bubba" Sloan, High Country Outfitters

Sylvia Talley, park volunteer; nurse
Henning Von Schmeeling, Chattahoochee Nature Center
Morning Washburn, park volunteer; Hyde Farm advocate
Tom Wilson, Boy Scouts of America; park volunteer and photographer
JoAnn Wood, social studies coordinator, Cobb County Schools

Consultant Team

Faye Goolrick, Certified Interpretive Planner
Goolrick Interpretive Group

Shannon Kettering, American Institute of Certified Planners
Pond| Ecos Project Manager

Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area

1978 Island Ford Parkway
Sandy Springs, GA 30350

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www.nps.gov/chat



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